SEE LOUIS TRACY'S MAGNIFICENT SERIAL, "THE INVADERS," IN PEARSON'S WEEKLY.

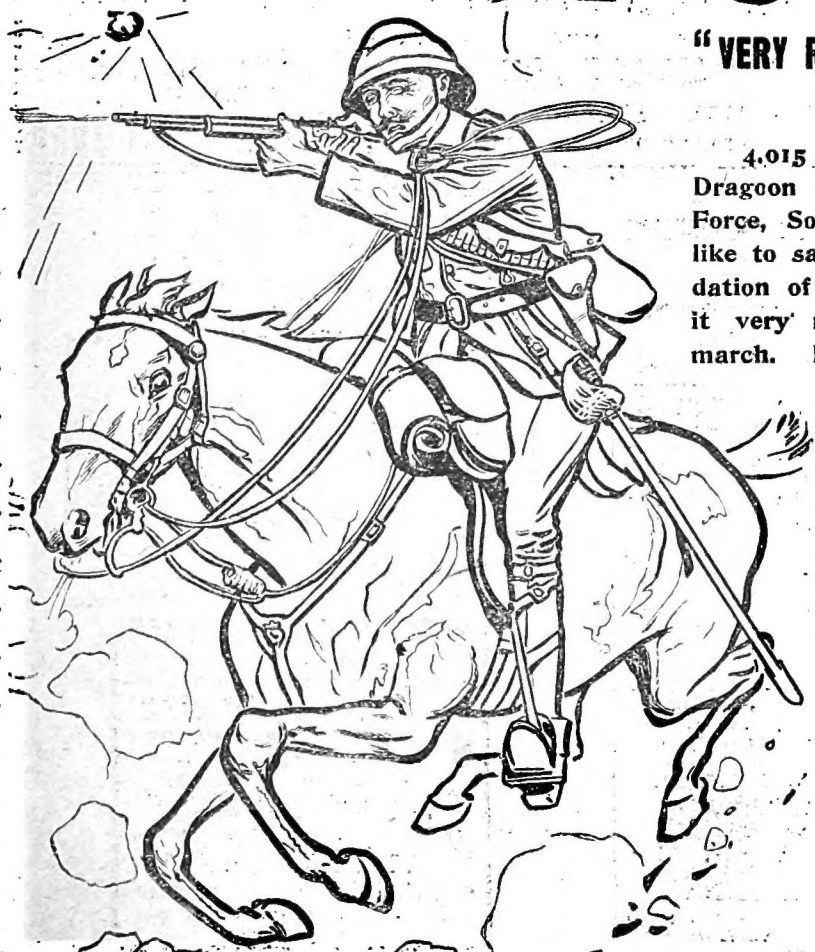
SHORT STORIES

A WEEKLY MAGAZINE FOR HOME AND TRAIN

No. 585. FOR WEEK ENDING MARCH 17TH, 1900. [ONE PENNY.

A PRIVATE IN THE DRAGOONS AND

DR TIBBLES' Vi-Cocoa



"VERY REFRESHING AFTER A LONG DAY'S MARCH."

4,015 PRIVATE G. H. DAY, 6th Dragoon Guards (Carabiniers), Field Force, South Africa, writes: "I should like to say a few words in recommendation of your Vi-Cocoa. I have found it very refreshing after a long day's march. I have strongly recommended it to my comrades, and those who have had the good fortune to obtain it speak most highly of it."

A dainty Sample Tin will be sent Post Free to any address, if, when writing (a post-card will do), the name of *Short Stories* is mentioned.

Address: DR. TIBBLES' VI-COCOA LTD., 60, 61, and 62 BUNHILL ROW, LONDON, E.C.

DAINTY SAMPLE FREE.

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

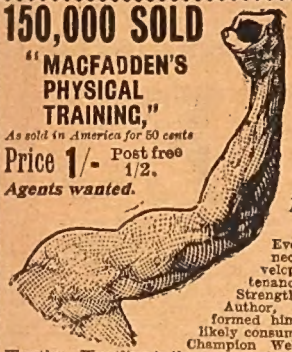
150,000 SOLD

"MACFADDEN'S PHYSICAL TRAINING,"

As sold in America for 50 cents

Price 1/- Post free 1/2.

Agents wanted.



The Famous Book By Professor B. A. Macfadden, the Leading American Physical Culture Authority.

128 Pages, Art Paper, 60 American Art Engravings. Chapters on Everything connected with development, maintenance of Health, Strength, etc., by Author, who transformed himself from a likely consumptive into a Champion Welter Weight Wrestler. Wrestling is the severest of all tests of physical fitness. Forewarned is forearmed. Be forewarned. Send for book now, and learn how to make yourself as fit as possible for the battle of life.

A COUPON VALUE 1s. FREE with Book.

"Health & Strength" Co., 73 Farringdon Street, E.C.

DON'T BE "BAGGY" AT THE KNEES OF YOUR TROUSERS

when for 2/6 you can have a pair of the "K" Trousers Stretchers, as used by society and military gentlemen.

It takes Trousers *always fit, feel, and look like new.* Sent free from observation per return of post and post free for 2/6. Two Pairs, post free for 4/6. A Nickelled Cigar Cutter, with ring for attaching to watch chain, will be given *free* to all sending orders within seven days of date of this paper, which please mention.

LONDON NOVELTY Co., 1 Abbotts Road, UPTON PARK, E.C.

STRENGTHEN YOUR HANDS

Strengthen your Grip. Strengthen your Wrist. Develop Enormous Strength in Fingers. Cure Writer's Cramp. Cure Bicycle Cramp. Cure Cold Hands. Cure Trembling Hands.

With a "Health and Strength"

WRIST MACHINE

Physicians and Athletes have generally concurred that the wrist is the weakest portion of the human frame. It is the portion of the anatomy where strength is measured.

A person with weak wrists is a weak person constitutionally. When the wrists are strengthened the entire muscular system is made stronger.

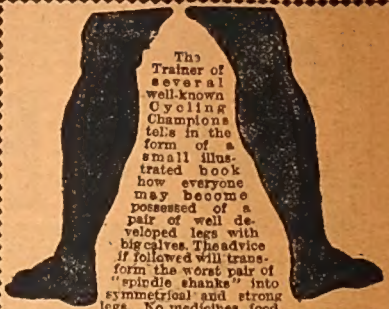
There is no point in a man's anatomy where lack of strength is felt so much as in the wrist, nor where great strength is so useful, often seriously affecting his bread-winning power. With a systematic use of this machine only ten minutes twice a day you can double the strength of your hand in one month, and increase the size of your forearm very materially.

Purchasing and using a pair of Wrist Machines—one in each hand—saves half the time occupied in exercising both hands with one machine, and also ensures a more equal development of strength in the two hands.

Agents Wanted.

Prices—ONE, 2/6, Post Free, 2/8. TWO, 4/9, Post Free.

"HEALTH & STRENGTH" CO., 73 FARRINGDON STREET, E.C.



The Trainer of several well-known Cycling Champions tells in the form of a small illustrated book how everyone may become possessed of a pair of well developed legs with big calves. The advice if followed will transform the worst pair of "spindle shanks" into symmetrical and strong legs. No medicines, food, or anything else to buy. Send P.O. and stamps for 1/1 and book will be sent under cover and post free. *Money back if not satisfied after month's trial.*

Champion Cyclist Trainer, 1 Abbot Rd., East Ham, E.

"EMPEROR MOUSTACHE TRAINER."

Invented by German Imperial Barber. Used by the German Emperor. Cures a straggling, ragged, etc., moustache, and quickly forces it to assume any desired style of arrangement. Worn at night. Sent per return post, and free from observation, post free for 2/6 or (finer quality) 3/6 only. Money back if not satisfactory.

London Novelty Co., 1 Abbotts Road, Upton Park, E.C.

WHO TO MARRY. WHEN TO MARRY

PLAIN TALK by the most celebrated American Medical Author and Specialist, Dr. Foote. A wonderful book. Nearly 1,000 pages. 200 anatomical illustrations. 36 true-to-life coloured illustrations. Over a million copies sold. Ours is the genuine unabridged American Edition with coloured plates. Post free, 6/6.

London Novelty Co., 1 Abbotts Rd., Upton Park, E.C.

ESTABLISHED 1851.

BIRKBECK BANK

Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane London.

INVESTED FUNDS £10,000,000.

The BIRKBECK ALMANACK, with full particulars, post free.

FRANCIS RAVENSCROFT, *Manager.*

ALL FAT PEOPLE

can safely **Reduce Weight and cure Corpulency permanently** by taking **TRILENE TABLETS** (Regd.) for a few weeks. They are small, agreeable, harmless, and never fail to IMPROVE both HEALTH and FIGURE without Change of Diet. An English Countess writes: "*Your Trilene Tablets act admirably.*"

Send 2s. 6d. to **THE TRILENE CO.**, Sole Proprietors, **66 Finsbury Pavement, London.**

SAMPLES OF TESTIMONIALS.

Princess Liechtenstein writes from Landsberg, Austria: "Pray send your excellent tablets directly." Mr. Canham, 87 Alexandra Road, Norwich: "Tablets cured my wife of extreme stoutness; it has never returned." Mrs. H. Cox, 28 Watnall Road, Hucknall Torkard, writes: "The Tablets reduced me 1½ stone." Mrs. S. Alexander, 102 Dixon Street, New Swindon, says: "They reduced me 23lb., and I am cured." Mrs. Darnley-Smith, of Landscove Vicarage, Ashburton, says: "Tablets have reduced me very much." Mrs. Crossley, of Rose Hill, Torver, Comston, says: "I weigh much less and can breathe so much easier; I am delighted."

VARICOCELE.

Every man suffering from Varicocele and the allied troubles, should send for treatise, describing their Causes, Symptoms, Results, and Successful and Painless Treatment without surgical operation or the use of cumbersome trusses and electrical appliances. Will be sent sealed, post free, three stamps.

S. S. MURRAY,
7, Southampton Row, London, W.C.

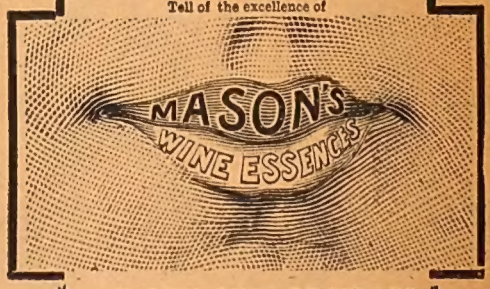
SEVEN PRIZE MEDALS.

C. BRANDAUER & Co's CIRCULAR POINTED PENS

These series of pens neither scratch nor spurt. They glide over the roughest paper with the ease of a soft lead pencil. An assorted sample box for 7 stamps from the works, Birmingham.

THOUSANDS OF LIPS

Tell of the excellence of



NATURE'S OWN BEVERAGE

NON-INTOXICATING.

MASON'S WINE ESSENCES become famous wherever they go. They are pronounced The Ideal by all who try them.

6D. BOTTLE makes **60 GLASSES** of the most Delicious Wine. Exquisite flavour and absolute purity. Suitable for all ages. Sample Bottle, post free, 9 stamps.

MASON'S COFFEE ESSENCE is recognised everywhere as the standard of purity. Have you tried it?

NEWBALL & MASON, NOTTINGHAM.

Makers of MASON'S EXTRACT OF HERBS.

Agents Wanted.

SHORT STORIES

No. 585.] [1d.

For the Week Ending March 17th, 1900.

THE MASCOT OF THE CARABINIERS.

"HARTLEY!"

The voice came softly through the still African night, with a stealthy, guarded utterance, that conveyed a distinct note of danger.

The hat of a Cape Carabinier popped up from behind a boulder on the ridge above, and a strong, square-jawed face showed dimly through the darkness.

"Well?"

"Did you hear anything?"

"Nothing."

"Strange! I thought I did."

"Where?"

"Out on the veld yonder."

"Well, keep your peepers skinned down there. It won't do to be caught napping. This isn't anything in the picnic line, you know."

With which sagacious reminder, the face and the Carabinier hat disappeared again, and silence fell on the hill once more.

On the ledge below Trevor Hamilton continued to pace the length of his beat, his head going round towards the black void yonder every few seconds, where night hung over the silent veld.

The clank of the spurred heel upon the loose stones,

All rights reserved.]

Digitized by Google

the jingle of accoutrements, and occasionally the stifled yawning "Heigh'o!" that came from the weary Carabinier, posted somewhere on the hillside, were the only sounds that broke the stillness of the rocky height.

Suddenly Hamilton pulled up short, with a quick indrawing of his breath. His keen, sensitive ear had caught that sound again—that strange, far-off sound, which seemed so oddly out of place in this barren range of hill and veld.

"Hartley! I say, Hartley!" he called, as softly as before.

"Confound it! What?"

There was a querulousness in the tones which seemed to convey the suspicion that despite the caution which had dropped from him on the score of "napping," Trooper Hartley had been doing something in that line himself behind the boulder up there.

"Come here; quick."

There was a growl on the ridge above, and the big Carabinier came slipping and sliding down through the darkness, swearing softly but profusely at the Boers, the darkness, outpost duty, and human affairs in general.

"Well, what is it?" he asked, when he reached his comrade's side.

The other held up his hand, and bent his ear towards the ground.

"Listen!" he said. "Do you hear it?"

"By jove! I do."

"What do you make of it?"

"Seems a bit odd, but it sounds to me exactly like the mewing of a cat."

"So it does to me."

"But what on earth brings the creature out there on the veld? There's not a house—not even a Kaffir hut—for ten miles around."

"That's what we've got to find out."

They listened again—intently, breathlessly, and up from the plain floated the faint, plaintive mi-ouw. Somehow, it seemed to strike upon them like a call for help.

"Don't altogether like the look of it," muttered Hamilton. "Might be some crafty trick of the Boers, for all we know."

"Ay, if they were hanging about anywhere," answered his companion. "But they're a good twenty miles off still."

"Don't be too sure of that, my friend. They're always on the move, trailing about all over the shop. I shouldn't be a bit surprised if there was a strong commando out on the veld there at the moment, and that this was just a feeler of their scouts to ascertain if these hills are occupied."

"Hullo! here comes the relief," put in Hartley. "We'd best get back and report the matter, anyhow."

There was a steady tramp, tramp, on the ridge above, a challenge, and the rattle of carbines as arms were grounded. The two below scrambled up the rocky slope, both eager to request leave to investigate this curious affair.

Captain Dewhurst, the officer in charge of the outposts had come round with the relief, and to him they hastened to make their report.

"Seems strange, certainly," he said, when he had heard them out. "It might be just as well to get at the bottom of it, trivial as it appears; for with a small, detached force such as ours, no precaution can be overlooked. We don't want another Nicholson's Nek affair."

He thought the matter over for a moment, gnawing his moustache in considerable doubt and perplexity.

"Well, you had better slip down quietly, you two, and see what you can make of it," he said, at length. "Get back as quickly as you can; I'll wait here for your report."

Scarcely were the words out of his mouth before the two had disappeared from the ridge, and were creeping warily down towards the veld. So gingerly did they pick their steps that not even a loose stone was dislodged in the descent.

Once at the foot of the hill, with the hummocky plain stretching away before them, they felt in their element. Both were born scouts—the pick of the Carabiniers in this respect—and generally hunted together, too. A prowl of this kind, with a spice of danger to brace them up, was a sort of thing very much after their hearts.

It would have required a remarkably keen eye to detect either of the crouching figures as they slipped noiselessly along through the darkness. The plaintive mi-ouw mi ouw, still came to them, feeble and muffled at times, then louder and more distinct.

"Where do you think it proceeds from?" Hartley whispered across to his companion.

"Bear away a little to your right," was the answer. "It seems to be somewhere in that direction."

On they crept—wary, watchful, keenly on the alert. They were moving straight for the spot now; the cry was right ahead of them.

Presently Hamilton, who had the eye of a hawk, edged his way across to the other, and laid a restraining hand on his arm. In an instant both were down flat on the ground.

"What is it?" whispered Hartley.

Hamilton raised his head a little, and peered steadily through the darkness.

"I do believe—yes, it *is* a cat, after all," he said.

"Where?" asked Hartley, his eyes sweeping round.

Hartley struck a match, and, shading the light between his hands, took a good look at the animal.

Digitized by Google

"Perched on the top of that boulder yonder."

They stole cautiously towards the spot. A big, black cat, which was sitting disconsolately upon the stone, got upon its legs, and mewed at them with outstretched neck.

Hartley struck a match, and shading the light between his hands, took a good look at the animal. A stifled cry broke from him.

"Why," he exclaimed, glancing up at his companion, "that's Miss Kennealy's 'Kruger!'"

"Upon my word, I believe you're right," Hamilton answered, with a shade of uneasiness in his tones.

The two men looked at each other with grave, questioning faces, until the match burnt down and scorched Hartley's fingers.

If any doubt lingered in their minds, it was quickly removed by the creature itself. On hearing its name pronounced, it hopped nimbly off its perch, with a sort of confirmatory mi-ouw, and rubbed itself against their legs. Then it trotted away to some little distance, paused, and looked back at them, its eyes scintillating in the starlight.

"By Jove!" exclaimed Hamilton, "there's something queer in this, Hartley."

"Looks like it," answered the other. "It strikes me that we'd better follow 'Kruger's' lead for once."

The two carabiniers had started to run.

The cat, seeing they were moving after it, trotted on again. Every few seconds its head came round, as if to make sure that they were not lagging behind. It led them towards a dip in the ground, about fifty or sixty yards away.

Hamilton was the first to reach the lip of the hollow. Peering down he made out something white lying at the bottom.

The object, whatever it was, suddenly moved, and the next second a feeble moan of suffering came up to him.

"Good Heavens!" he cried out. "Is that you, Miss Kennealy?"

"Yes," was the reply. And then, with a sharp catch of the breath, indicative of pain, the girl added, "That is Mr. Hamilton I think?"

For answer, he went flying down the slope, closely followed by the astonished Hartley. In a moment they were at her side.

"Oh, I'm so glad that you are friends!" she cried, looking up at them, but without attempting to rise. "I thought at first it might be the Boers."

"The Boers!" they exclaimed.

"Yes. Have you seen nothing of them yet?"

"Not a sign."

"Oh, I am in time, then!" she cried.

"In time! For what?"

"To stop you from advancing. The Dutch are lying in wait for you among the Lothulia Hills—in ambush there. I——" She broke off suddenly, and caught in her lips with a little moan of pain.

"Are you hurt, Miss Kennealy?" asked Hamilton, bending over her with anxious solicitude.

"Oh, it is nothing very much," she answered, lightly. "I tumbled down here in the dark, and gave my ankle a nasty twist."

In an instant they had lifted her tenderly from the ground; and then, clasping hands, formed a seat for her. With an arm round the neck of each, she was carried from the hollow, and they bore her swiftly back towards the hill.

As they hurried on across the veld with their burden, the girl told them her story.

It appeared that a body of Boers had looted her uncle's place that very morning, and turned the two of them out of house and home. The old man they compelled to start off in one direction; the girl in another. Her cat "Kruger," who was accustomed to follow her about like a dog, stole away after her.

Before leaving the house, she had overheard two of the Boers in conversation. Having a fair knowledge of their language, she was enabled to gather from what they said that someone down at Freemont station was keeping them posted up in every movement on the part of the British. From him they learnt that a column was to be detached, in order to turn their flank, and a strong commando had been sent out to lie in wait for it among the Lothulie Hills. No sooner was she out of their clutches than she started off across country to try and intercept the column, and frustrate the treachery of the rascally spy.

Digitized by Google

"Did you hear the scoundrel's name?" Hamilton asked, between his clenched teeth.

"Yes," she said. "I think it was Plover, or Glover, or—— Oh, oh! you very nearly let me fall!"

No doubt they did. The name was familiar to both; and at the first moment their consternation was so great that they well-nigh dropped their burden on the spot. Joseph Glover was the English postmaster at Freemont!

"You are quite sure of this, Miss Kennealy?" asked Hamilton.

"Oh, yes," she replied, "It appears that every item of information is wired to them regularly."

That was quite enough. With a little cry the girl clutched them both tightly around the neck, for the two Carabiniers had started to run.

Captain Dewhurst was not a little astonished when he beheld his scouts bearing a white-clad form up the hill, and noticed that the little party was accompanied by a big black cat.

When he heard their story, he complimented the girl warmly on the splendid courage she had displayed in undertaking a ten-mile walk across the open veld in order to warn them of their danger.

The two troopers bore her on to the camp, where, when the news got out, she was accorded a magnificent reception. After a brief interview with the commander of the column, she was placed in the doctor's charge, while the Cape Carabiniers took upon themselves the care of the cat.

In less than half-an-hour a score or so of troopers rode out from the camp, and clattered away towards Freemont, which lay about five miles to the rear. Arriving there, Mr. Joseph Glover was hauled unceremoniously out of bed, and it required all the influence of the officer in charge to restrain the men from talking summary vengeance upon the scoundrel there and then.

As it was, a court-martial was held in the British camp that night, and at daybreak next morning the pitiful wretch met with his deserts.

* * * * *

The position occupied by the column being a strong one, it was decided to hold on to it during the day. At nightfall the force stole out, and trailed away across the veld, moving forward with the utmost rapidity.

But the Boers waited for them in vain among the Lothulie hills. Instead of proceeding in that direction as was originally intended, the British Commander gave it a wide berth, and slipped quietly past in the darkness.

At dawn next morning, he fell upon the main body of the Dutch, who, never for a moment suspecting that their little plan had miscarried, were taken by complete surprise, and the British force succeeded in turning their flank. The action was a most brilliant and successful one; and of all the troops engaged, the corps which distinguished itself most was the Cape Carabiniers.

Foremost in every charge they made that day were Troopers Hamilton and Hartley. The latter, indeed, was placed *hors de combat* towards the close, being dragged out of the fray with a brace of Mauser bullets in his big body.

As he lay in the field hospital that night, Hamilton, who felt almost like a brother to this great, big-hearted comrade of his, came in search of him. He found him woefully despondent.

"I'm done for, old man," said Hartley, looking up at him. "We'll do no more scouting together, you and I. But there's just one little thing I wanted to speak to you about before I go under."

"What's that?" asked his friend.

"It's—it's—about Miss Kennealy!"

Hamilton started, and looked down at the prostrate form as if a light had suddenly dawned upon him.

"Yes, you've hit it," responded the other. "I was fond of her too, you know; but I could see with half an eye that it was you she preferred, and so I kept in the background. Perhaps you'll tell her about it after I'm gone."

Hamilton, with averted head, pressed his hand in silence, and a great sorrow lay on his heart as he returned to his troop.

But in spite of his gloomy forebodings, Hartley did not "go under" after all. The Boers were often to feel the weight of his brawny arm again. When he returned to duty, and learnt that Hamilton was engaged to Miss Kennealy, he heaved a mighty sigh, and went off to try and get a slap at the Dutch by way of consoling himself.

Miss Kennealy presented the sagacious "Kruger" to the Carabiniers, and they regard the animal as a much-prized mascot. If you want to get their dander up against the Boers, just bring that cat to the fore.

The very sight of it seems to remind them of the day that a delicate girl was turned out on the trackless veld by those heartless wretches—to perish there, for all they cared.

J. L. Hornibrook.

Digitized by Google

THE POLICE CONSTABLE AND THE FRUIT-SELLER.

It might be interesting to consider what fateful power it is that seizes two individuals born at opposite ends of the earth and hurries them along through varied scenes and vicissitudes, each ignorant of the other's existence, bringing them together sometimes in love and friendship, sometimes in enmity and deadly hatred.

These philosophic thoughts were suggested a few days ago, as we passed a fruit stand, which stood at a busy spot well to the east of Aldgate Station.

By that stand, presiding over its destinies, was a black-haired, black-eyed, black-eyebrowed, olive-complexioned daughter of Greece. By that stand and gazing into those Greek optics was a stalwart form with red hair, blue eyes, blue coat and helmet, and Jubilee medal on breast. He looked good-natured and honest and wore a well-trimmed blonde moustache. There was one defect in his physique—he was so round-shouldered as to be almost humpbacked. His name was Michael O'Callaghan, or, as he himself put it, "Police Constable Michael O'Callaghan."

There they stand, the one for aught we know a lineal descendant of Leonidas, if that worthy had ventured into matrimony before he ventured into Thermopylæ: and the other—it goes without saying—a descendant of somebody equally ancient and illustrious. Yes, there they stand—from Ireland and Greece—making love to each other on the kerbstones at a busy spot in the World's Capital. Oh, love, they say you rule the court, the camp, the grove; you do indeed, and you rule the kerbstones, the apple stands, and the police force.

How Mr. Michael O'Callaghan had ever succeeded in making love to the fair Zoe—for that was the name of this Pythoness of the apple stand—the boy Eros himself only can tell! for Zoe's vocabulary in English was limited to such trade terms as "two fo' penny," "three fo' tuppence," and Michael's knowledge of modern Greek was, if anything, more limited. Love laughs at locksmiths; but the little rascal in this case seemed equally to laugh at languages, and the tower of Babel had no more penal consequence for him than if it never raised its defiant head to an offended Heaven.

The constable's beat embraced the spot on which stood the apple stand, and surely no policeman ever travelled his district so rapidly as he did. Ever and anon, his medal flashing coruscations of light, and his eyes, blue as his native skies, when it is not raining there, flashing coruscations of love, would round the corner and approach the apple stand

"How much?" he would say, holding an apple which Zoe had burnished that morning with a greasy rag, while the Volapuk language of love would say more truly than ever Byron said it

"Zoe mou sas agapo,"

and Zoe would answer with a smile and a not unmusical voice:

"Two fo' penny."

Then they would rummage amid the fruit, their hands would meet, a little surreptitious squeeze of the fingers would follow and then this guardian of the peace would march along, twirling his moustache, lowly whistling "The Girl I left behind Me," and dreaming dreams no "copper" ever dared to dream before. These day dreams generally took the form of a cosy little home, with Zoe its mistress, and a little Græco-Irish O'Callaghan crowing and kicking up its heels on the floor.

Several times each day that unspoken comedy of love was performed. Day after day Michael boldly gazed into those dark Grecian eyes, and Zoe stole bashful glances into the Irish blue ones, and the surreptitious finger-squeezing was perpetrated; but never a word was spoken save:

"How much?"

"Two fo' penny."

The time had now come when language was a necessity, and towards this desideratum our Lothario in blue as he marched through the crowded streets, bent all the energies of his thinking powers. Many methods rapidly suggested themselves to his fervid imagination and were as rapidly rejected, and many a smile played over his broad face as he saw the "bull" in some of those suggestions.

One day, when off duty, while immersed in deep thought, he was suddenly aroused by a commotion issuing from a crowd of small boys in a narrow court.

It was only a fight between two street-arabs. The others had formed a ring, and various words of encouragement were offered by the young spectators to the champions in the ring. At another time, Michael would have passed this matter by; but now he felt that he was prospectively the head of a family and that he would not tolerate such things. On tiptoe he approached the scene of the combat.

As Michael approached he heard someone in the crowd scream:

"Look out there, Jim, he's got a knife."

The boys, ranging in every degree of dirty-facedness

Digitized by Google

and tatteredness, were too intent on the struggle to notice the officer, who reached the outer edge of the crowd unseen.

One of the boy combatants, with swarthy face, scrowling brow, and a recently acquired black eye, stood at one side of the ring like a hunted animal at bay with his hand behind his back and concealed under his coat; while the other urchin, small and wiry-looking, with his little hands clenched and his eyes blazing, stood like an infantile gladiator ready to spring on his antagonist and dare the worst, knife and all.

In a moment the policeman had each of them by the collar. In another instant he pulled the hand of the swarthy boy from underneath his coat, and wrenched from it a murderous-looking knife.

At the constable's approach the crowd of boys broke and scampered like rats on the appearance of their feline enemy; and, while he was wresting the knife from the swarthy boy, his late antagonist took advantage of the opportunity to regain his liberty, so that officer and captive were left alone.

The distance to the station was not far, and the officer carried off his little captive.

"Who gave you the black eye?" asked the officer, looking down from his six feet on the diminutive little man walking by his side.

"He give it ter me," answered the child, with a scowl that belonged to more mature years.

"And you came near killing him, and then you'd be hung."

"I'll give it ter 'im yet," hissed the boy through his clenched teeth.

"You're Italian, ain't ye?" queried the policeman.

"Noa, I wus borned in Greece."

"Ye're a Greek, are ye?" half soliloquized Mr. O'Callaghan, and immediately a secret sympathy sprang up in the mind of the captor for his captive.

Half-a-dozen thoughts now jostled each other through the constable's mind. His prospective paternity came upon him again, once more he saw the Græco-Irish scion of the O'Callaghan kicking his infantile heels in mid-air, and he softened toward Zoe's compatriot.

A thought came—he might be a brother of Zoe's, and this thought was voiced by the question, "What's yer name, my boy?"

"Petros; they calls me Pete for short."

"What's yer other name?"

"Zarouski."

That point was settled. Was not Zarouski Zoe's name? They had almost reached the station when the officer suddenly turned round, saying to the boy. "Come along," and, walking through two or three streets, led his captive to his own lodging. Here he locked the door, and, putting the poor little urchin, who thought he was going to be tortured to death, in a seat opposite him, opened the ball thus: "Pete, do ye know what they'll do to ye there?" jerking his thumb in the direction of the Police Court.

"No," replied the lad, his short bare legs hanging down from the chair and six inches from the floor, while dismay was written on the face staring at his interlocutor.

"They'll send ye to a Reformatory School, where you'll have to work every day, get nothin' to eat, and be flogged every night."

The policeman winced at his own want of veracity, while the poor little fellow dropped his head on his breast in despair.

"You ain't a bad kid, are ye?" asked the constable.

"I ain't when I's left 'lone; I's bad when I's maddened," added the boy, candidly.

"Pete, I've took a likin' to ye," says the policeman. "and if ye promise not to hurt that boy that blacked yer eye, when ye meet 'im, I'll be yer friend, and ye won't go to the Reformatory School."

Pete didn't answer; it was not every day that people took a liking to him. He clutched his old rag of a hat tighter in his swarthy hands and the tears stood in his eyes.

"Now will you promise not to injure that boy?" queried the officer, with an assumption of that tone he had seen the police justice assume toward culprits. Still the child—child-man, rather—did not speak. He was doing his best to control the rising tears. He was afraid he would blubber out, and that, according to his code, would be unmanly.

"Well," queried the constable, "do ye promise?" The boy nodded his head, with a mass of black, unkempt hair on it, as a sign in the affirmative, and with a quick movement of his hand across his eyes managed to intercept a tear that in spite of his efforts escaped his eyelids. The policeman saw and was satisfied; then, addressing himself to the child, as if he was a full-grown man, and cheerily rubbing his hands, he said:

"Now, Pete, me boy, we'll have some dinner, you and me."

Very soon they were on the best of terms, and Pete would have gladly laid down his life for his new friend. He told O'Callaghan his little history.

But what interested the officer most was that Pete knew Zoe.

"Yes, I knows Zoe," said the little fellow, swelling with delight. "Zoe's been here on'y a little—about three months; her old fadder, he bought that stan' off a Italian feller, and Zoe runs it all her own self, she does."

The officer had early in their acquaintance determined to make use of Pete in declaring his love for Zoe, so that his friendship had a selfish motive, and was not at all so disinterested as was Pete's for him; so he took the little fellow entirely into his confidence, and the latter was as delighted at being able to do his great friend a favour as was the little mouse in the fable when it was given an opportunity to gnaw the meshes of the net that held entangled its great benefactor the lion. Perhaps the simile is a bad one in this case, as Pete was helping to entangle his friend in the meshes of a net, rather than to disentangle him.

The officer well knew that in the course he had determined on there were many difficulties to be overcome; he recognised the fact that it was a condition, not a theory, that confronted him, and taking a heroic resolve, determined to learn Greek; that is, he determined to learn enough Greek to pop the question in it, and Pete should be his teacher. It did not need many words, he soliloquized—one short sentence; and towards the production of this one great sentence our hero turned the full force of his great intellect; after covering, with a short stub of a pencil, quires of foolscap paper—why fool's-cap rather than any other kind of cap is not stated—he selected the following, more in despair of being able to do better than on account of its perfect fulness:

"Zoe, I love you. Do you love me in return?"

This was not such a bad sentence, our love-sick hero thought, as he surveyed it with his head first on one side and then on the other; and the author of this veracious history is inclined to agree with him and earnestly

Digitized by Google

recommends it to young gentlemen in similar situations. Pete could put this gem of a sentence into pretty fair Greek, all but the words "in return"; what did that mean? he asked, and our hero replied, "Why, to love me in return means to love me back." Accordingly the sentence as Pete understood it read:

"Zoe, I love you; do you love me back?"

Now, Pete was a precocious child, and very bright in those things in which he had had experience; but a little knowledge of philology would have taught him there was such a thing as idiom in all languages, and that literal translation often gives a different and sometimes ludicrous meaning. But what he lacked in knowledge was made up in enthusiasm for his friend. He translated boldly like the reformation translators, and like them arrived at similar results. He knew no distinction between a noun and an adverb; so accordingly the adverb "back" he translated into a colloquial and somewhat slangy Greek noun meaning a "crooked back." Pete, instead of the personal pronoun "me," used the possessive adjective "my;" so that the sentence religiously committed to memory by Michael, instead of being "Zoe, I love you; do you love me in return?" read: 'Zoe, I love you; do you love my crooked back?"

At length the fateful sentence was learnt; and one bright morning in May, O'Callaghan, in his newest uniform, boldly marched toward Zoe and the apple-stand, with Pete closely following.

Zoe spoke to Pete in their own modern ungrammatical Greek, and to Michael in that language of the eyes where grammar cuts no figure. But this could not last always, and our lover, with his heart galloping all over his body, prepared for that terrible ordeal which it is said causes the bravest to tremble. Holding up in his hand a rosy apple so that passers-by would think he was asking the price, he repeated with terrible precision the sentence as he had learnt it.

Zoe did love him, and she said so in Greek so vehement and voluble that Pete, the would-be interpreter, did not understand more than every second word. She went on to say that she did love, and that she did not mind his poor crooked back the least bit. The words flitted by Pete so rapidly that he succeeded only in understanding and retaining the last sentence.

Judge of our hero's astonishment went Pete translated this back to him:

"She says she'll marry you, but she don't like your crooked back the least bit."

Zoe stood by, listening to Pete's English, her eyes beaming over with love. Now, laughter is closely akin to love, and for the first time our hero, in those Grecian orbs, saw only laughter; he was wounded in his most sensitive point, and that by her he loved. His beloved Zoe told him that indeed she would marry him, but she did not like his humpback the least little bit. With one reproachful glance at Zoe he turned and slowly walked away. Zoe saw the reproachful glance, and saw like the the soldiers at Balaclava, that "someone had blundered." Perhaps, she thought, he was going away, as he often did, because the passers-by were beginning to notice. Perhaps he would return.

Time rolled on calmly and inevitably as if nothing had ever happened to mar the happiness of two human beings. Time rolled on, and every morning Zoe burnished her apples with the same greasy rag, and always looked neat and trim, expecting him to return. She had learnt enough English now for all practical purposes. But he never returned. He is still single, somewhat more silent than he used to be, but a brave and faithful member of the force, and Zoe, with the blue-black hair that Michael admired so much, streaked with grey, is still the Grecian maiden of the apple-stand.

The moral of this story is; Never propose in a language you do not understand, and never employ Petros Zarouskis to interpret the reply. B. E. Drone.

THE WOLVES.

A dark December night—dark as the grave—a moaning storm, which congeals one's breath, freezes the blood in one's veins, and stirs up whole mountains of snow in front of it—heaven and earth amalgamated in an endless fog, an unlimited darkness, nowhere broken by so much as the twinkle of a light.

Even the lanterns of the fortress have been extinguished by the wind, which rushes through the midnight with an uproar like the howling and laughter of evil spirits. The redoubts and the rampart, the dry moat and the gates, are wrapped in gloom and silence.

The storm rages round the little guardhouse. It throws flying masses of snow against the thickly frosted windows, it sweeps across the roof, and ceases its clamour for a while, preparing for a new assault.

Inside, in the officers' room, the lieutenant on guard lies dreaming on the leather couch. His thoughts wander—far, far away from the fortress buried in the snow. The moaning and howling of the storm outside form the accompaniment to a vision which rises up before his mind,—a vision of sparkling lights, of sweet perfumes, and of soft dance music—and then, like another dream, the Nevski Prospect appears, filled with a noisy crowd, inundated by the bluish flood of electric lights, in the glare of which great snowflakes hover in gentle undulations to the ground. A sudden noise of heavy steps. The sergeant stands before him.

"Well, what is it?"

"I have to report to your honour that the cold is still increasing. The thermometer has gone down to 25 degrees."

"What's to be done, brother?" the lieutenant yawns "As it is, the sentries are relieved every hour."

"At your honour's service—but it's getting rather difficult at Post 5. The men just came back sweating as if they had been in a vapour-bath—they had to wade in snow up to their hips."

Post 5 was situated on a distant redoubt, which served as a powder-magazine. Directly in front of it was the river, now frozen to its lowest depths, which, on the other shore, gradually turned into a series of swamps. The latter were bounded, for miles round, by thick, undergrown woods.

"Well, they'll have to be patient to-night, that's all," said the officer. "Have you anything more to report?"

"Nothing, your honour."

"You may go, then."

Digitized by Google

The relieved sentries had come back; they were stamping the snow from their waterproof boots, shaking it off their sheep-skin coats, and disentangling their bashliks from their ears and necks.

"Well, brothers, how do you like this weather?" asked one of the soldiers, a thickset fellow with bright eyes and a grin on his good-natured face.

"Wait till you're frozen—you won't feel like laughing then," growled another, as he hung his heavy sheepskin on a hook.

The others had approached the table, where one of their comrades sat reading aloud from a small volume entitled, "Soldier Life." The men formed a circle round him, their eyes fixed intently upon the lips of the reader, from which issued detached words:

"—And—then—they—went—through—with—such—a—manœuvre——"

As the newcomers stepped into the circle of light thrown by a small lamp shaded by a tin reflector, the reader stopped:

"Is it bad outside?" he asked.

"Vassili Petrovitch almost got frozen, at Post 6; the storm is awful, it even fills the sentry-box with snow. You can't get away from it."

"Will you stop talking!" cried the sergeant, looking up from his guard-book. "That's no more than your duty—it's what you swore to do."

The men remained silent. Nothing was heard but the roaring of the storm outside.

"What was that?" said one of them suddenly, in a low voice, "yonder from across the river——?"

"What was it?"

"Don't you hear it, brothers? It's wolves!"

The men looked at each other. Then one of them said, derisively:

"Wolves? Nonsense. It was nothing but the storm."

The first speaker insisted:

"It was the howling of wolves, nothing else. They are on the other side of the river, opposite the powder redoubt."

That was where Post 5 stood. Who was the next to relieve him? All looked at Pantkratieff, a young recruit, who rose from his seat with a look of dismay.

The men laughed as if to banish their own fears.

"You had better look out, the wolves will tear you to pieces."

One of the fellows went down on all fours, showed his teeth, and approached the recruit, uttering a low growl.

At this, however, the sergeant started up angrily:

"Be quiet!" he shouted, "or you'll be sorry. A nice way, this, to behave on guard. Quick, get the next relief ready."

The soldiers wrapped themselves in their sheepskins and bashliks, and seized their muskets. Their faces had grown graver as the foremost threw open the door. They were met by a cloud of whirling snow and an icy temperature as they stepped out. To their eyes, dazzled by the light, the darkness outside seemed impenetrable.

They groped their way out, bending forward and bracing themselves against the storm, and disappeared in the gloom.

"Halt? Who goes there?"

From somewhere in the moat the voice of Post 5 came out of the darkness—hoarse and indistinct for the snow-dust filled the mouth of everyone who attempted to call or shout.

The sentries were exchanged in silence. The one relieved groped and waded away with the others through the storm. The young recruit remained behind alone at Post 5.

He entered the sentry box, which, at least, sheltered him from the tempest if not from the cold. Inside, he sat down, and set his musket by his side in the deep snow which had drifted in through the door, and listened in silence to the chaos of sounds outside in the darkness.

What were they doing at home now? There was snow, plenty of snow there, too, in the lonely village of the steppe. The low cabins would be buried in it. It was hard work to dig a passage from the door to the street, and keep it open.

Well, what of that? Snow keeps you warm. And what a happy time they are having in the village now, in the winter season. They go from house to house, in disguise, to visit their neighbours; they skim, in their three-horsed sleighs, across the boundless, snow-covered fields; and inside the cabin, in the cosy living-room, dimly lit by a flickering lamp, two old people just at this hour are sitting opposite each other at table, thinking of him, and talking about him, while after having crossed themselves, they eat their supper.

The young recruit felt a lump rising in his throat—a deep feeling of home-sickness came over him, here in the midst of storm and darkness, and an unspeakable longing for his loved ones.

What was the good of thinking. He rose quickly and seized his musket, in order to leave the sentry-box, when, suddenly——

A long-drawn-out, piercing howl came out of the profound darkness just in front of him, and lost itself in a hoarse, low growl. From the rampart above a second, deeper voice responded, and from farther off, beyond the river, the fierce sounds were repeated in chorus.

The wolves!

The blood of the lonely sentry seemed to freeze in his veins. Involuntarily he leant against the wooden sentry-box, so as to protect his back. Then he cocked his musket, and stared out into the night as if he would have penetrated the darkness perforce. His heart beat in vehement throbs; he bent his head forward in order to catch the faintest sound that the wind might bear to him.

But all was quiet, perfectly quiet. The young fellow drew a deep breath. The minutes passed slowly. When would the relief come?

He felt a mad desire to leave his post and run to the guard-house as fast as his feet would carry him. But he knew his duty. He could not desert his post, he was obliged to stay, dead or alive, where the orders of his superior had placed him.

"The wolves are gone," he thought to himself "they only wanted to frighten me, and——"

There, nearer than before, the lugubrious howl, and, without delay, the answer from the rampart above. But no longer from a single wolf! No, that was the snarling and barking of the whole pack, which had crossed the river in the meantime.

Evidently the wind had given them the scent, and they knew that solitary man was standing there in the wintry night, a man whose hair rose up with horror under his lambskin cap, and who clasping his musket with trembling hands, stared up at the rampart.

There, on the ridge, where the snow had been blown away, crouched the pack. Their horrible yelping alternately grew louder and died away again, only to recommence after a long pause. Each time, in long-drawn-out tones, the bass of a veteran wolf rose above the rest of the hoarse chorus. He appeared to be the leader of the company, and to be far in advance of the others. It seemed as if his shadow were visible in the darkness

Digitized by Google

—and now, suddenly, two phosphorescent green points flashed out directly in front of the recruit, and more piercing than ever, the howls from above recommenced.

He aimed and fired.

Like a clap of thunder the report reverberated through the moat—then, a despairing whine from the rampart, a whine which brought the yelping of the pack to a sudden end. Dark shadows flitted to and fro, there were sounds of snarling, gnashing of teeth, and crunching—the wolves in mutual combat, were tearing to pieces the carcase of their comrade who had been shot.

In the meantime the sentinel was reloading his musket. He had but one cartridge left. That used, he would be defenceless. He must save it till the last moment.

But there was no time to lose. He raised his musket. Shadowy forms approached him from all sides—greenish lights came flickering towards him—the horrible sounds drew nearer and nearer.

Just as he was about to fire, an indistinct mass detached itself from the dark background of the rampart. It sprang toward him, but missing him, struck the ground in front of him violently, seizing, as it did so, the sleeve of his coat, so that the old skin tore, and a piece of it fell to the ground with the wolf.

At the same time the musket discharged itself upward. The recruit swung it, still smoking, in the air, turned it about, and brought the butt, with all his force, down upon the ground beside him, before the wolf whose mouth was still filled with fragments of wool and skin, could prepare for a new attack. The butt struck something hard, and when Pankratieff lifted the musket, the beast remained motionless. Its backbone was broken.

But in another moment he felt something tugging vehemently at the musket, something which had fastened its greedy fangs in the barrel. The horde of yelping shadows darted at him, the green stars shone on every side—the wolves dug their teeth into his coat—he fell to the ground under their weight, with his face in the snow. The hot, fetid breath of the creatures was all about him—he felt them tugging and tearing at his coat—now it was beginning to give way.

Suddenly a bullet came whistling over the group—a flash lit up the darkness—shot on shot followed—the soldier lay alone. The wolves had receded a few steps, and stood in a semi-circle, growling and showing their teeth in indecision.

But they perceived that it was no single enemy who was approaching—it was a whole troop of armed men—and suddenly all was still. Silently the beasts crept and trotted away through the darkness.

The young recruit lay on the ground motionless. All around him were the fragments of his sheepskin coat; his bent musket lay beside him. He was alive, he breathed, and seemed uninjured. And soon he recovered consciousness, and realized that a detachment of his comrades, who had heard his shots in the guardhouse, had rescued him at the last moment.

They took him under the arms and led him along the moat back to the warm guardroom. Behind him several of the soldiers dragged along the wolves that had been killed—three gaunt, long-legged beasts.

After that the redoubt was deserted.

In an hour the wolves returned. They renewed their howling and snuffed and looked about for a victim. But nothing living stirred round about. They had accomplished one thing—Post No. 5 was not occupied again that night.

I. Metropski.

£250 * *

WILL BE GIVEN TO THE READER OF "SHORT STORIES" FROM WHOM WE RECEIVE A COUPON BEARING THE EXACT DAY UPON WHICH THE

British Flag will be Officially Hoisted in Pretoria.

ALL YOU HAVE TO DO.

Fill in the coupon below.

Send it in to us as soon as you like.

Send as many coupons as you like.

If two competitors name the exact day the money will go to the one who gives the correct hour of that day. If two or more give the correct day and hour the £250 in full will go to him whose coupon we received bearing the earliest date of sending in. Pretoria time, which is about an hour and three quarters in advance of English time, must be stated.

The Editor's decision must be final, and competitors must only enter on that understanding.

The Editor reserves the right to close this competition at a day's notice.

Address all envelopes to "War Editor," Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C

Pretoria Coupon, S.S. *March 17, 1900.*

Name.....

Address.....

.....

Day..... *Hour*.....

(Pretoria Time.)

We shall take it that competitors mean the year 1900 unless they state otherwise.

This notice and coupon also appears every week in the ILLUSTRATED WAR NEWS, HOME NOTES, SUNDAY READER, PEARSON'S WEEKLY, and the BIG BUDGET.

Readers of SHORT STORIES may enter with this Coupon.

Digitized by Google

TWO WOMEN AND MR. JOHN ALLEN.

I AM a commercial traveller. I have been one for years, and possibly shall remain one to the end of my working days. But do not mistake me; there are grades of commercial travellers as much as in every other profession or business. Take banks, for instance. Once, when I was a youth, I knew a bank clerk. It was Groggs' Bank, and he worked early and late and got very little money. But look at the position he held. Trusted with thousands of pounds! My heart glowed when I spoke to him, and I felt I was the envied of all beholders when I was with him.

Then I met another bank clerk. He was in the Bank of England. Wishing to ingratiate myself with this new friend, I told him of Biggs, in Groggs'.

Now this Bank of England chap was tall and had a cast in one eye, but he brought them both to bear on me as he replied in a tone impossible (in its utter contempt) to reproduce on paper: "Where is Groggs' Bank?"

So you see there are grades as I said before, and by dint of hard work and inherent talent for commerce I may say I was one of the commercial travellers. I was known in all parts of the world. I never stayed anywhere for more than a flying visit. Yet somehow the eccentricities of China, the hurry and bustle of New York, the glitter and daintiness of Paris, and the sombre magnificence of the Californian forests never gave me that utter feeling of restfulness and home as did a ride on the outside of a Hammersmith 'bus in London!

By which remark you will see that I was born a Cockney, and every stone in the dear, dirty old place was worth as much as a Kimberley diamond to me.

I could have ridden in cabs, I could even have kept my carriage, like some of the others did, but somehow I never cared to. A 'bus I loved and a 'bus I would have.

On the particular evening on which my story begins I was on the Hammersmith 'bus smoking a pipe and staring down on the tops of the hats in Piccadilly.

It was just the most perfect evening in May, when London was at its fullest, and I puffed away, well content with all mankind.

Suddenly, I found my pipe wanted refilling, and I hadn't a match!

This did not disturb me much, because there are always smokers on a 'bus, so having filled up I turned to borrow a vesta off a neighbour.

Not a soul was smoking!

I reviled my luck and fingered the pipe lovingly. It was one given me by a friend out at the Cape, and I had a great regard for it.

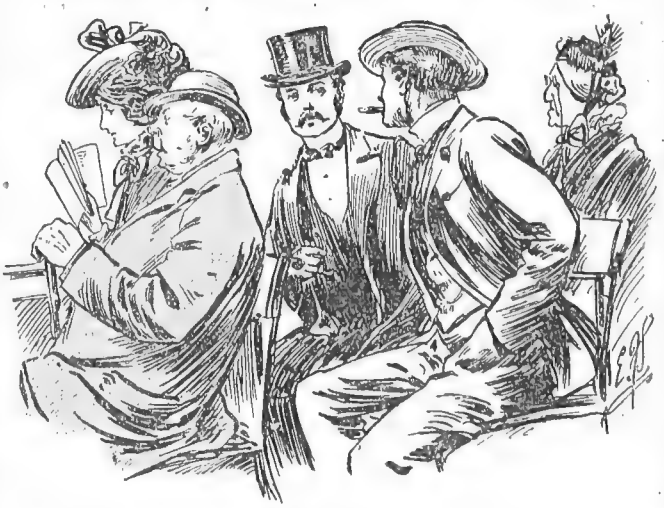
The only vacant seat was next to me, and presently a young clean shaven man came and sat on it.

He wore his hat at a rakish angle, and, joy! was smoking a cigar.

So I borrowed a match off him, and we struck up an acquaintance. I soon found out he had travelled a bit, but seemed to know more of parts of New Zealand than elsewhere.

Then he told me he was purser on board a P. and O., and spent half his time here, and half at Sydney.

I took a fancy to him as soon as I saw him. There was that healthy, manly, shall I say breezy, way about him that so many sailors have, and he was nice-looking too, with curly hair and open grey eyes that looked you straight in the face with a merry twinkle in them that I liked. Altogether, Jack Allen was a man that anyone would trust on sight, and I would have staked any amount he was one who could neither tell a lie nor do a mean action, which only shows how easily you can be deceived in this world.



I borrowed a match off him and struck up an acquaintance.

We chatted on till we found a mutual friend. There is nothing like a mutual friend. It is true he was only a billiard marker in Boston, but he was a good sort, come down. Anyway,

Digitized by Google

he was a mutual friend, and that was enough. By the time we had found him we had reached Hammersmith, and both got down and on to the Kew tram.

Allen was as full of spirits as a schoolboy, and kept drawing my attention to every pretty woman that passed.

Now, I am perilously near forty, and must confess have not much knowledge of that most complex puzzle—woman.

As a young man I had no time. Some young men will tell you they can get on better when they have a woman to care about, but don't you believe it. They are an enticing, conceited lot, and most expensive. That is for my young men readers. My father gave me this advice, and I took it when I got on a bit. Women folk, somehow, did not take much interest in me, so I got left again; so, as I say, I never had much opportunity of studying them. But, Allen! I don't think a girl passed our 'bus that he did not have a look at her. First this side and then that, till I had to tell him of it.

"I presume you are a bachelor, and that makes you so anxious to look at every face," I said sternly.

He reddened a little under the tan.

"Not I; I'm a married man, with the best and dearest wife any man had. But I always was the same—I love any and every girl I see!"

I felt mildly scandalised.

"What's more, I shall prove it to you, because I am going to take you home with me to-night, and you will meet Mrs. Allen and the baby. She'll be delighted, too, if you will stay to supper."

I stared a minute and then recollection came to my aid.

He was as good as his word, and we alighted at a small house covered with creepers just putting out their new green leaves. In front was a garden, with a large rose-tree in it, a fact which interested me at once. Always devoted to flowers, I hold the rose as the queen of the garden, and it is my firm belief that to graft a wild double cherry on to a white—but, then, I forgot myself for the moment. This is not a treatise on roses. Mrs. Allen opened the door to welcome us, and unaffectedly kissed her husband, while she held the prettiest little baby out of harm's way under her arm.

I own, then, for the first time in my life, I should think, I realised I had lost something, and the mental picture of my comfortless and desolate lodgings came vividly before my eyes.

Mrs. Allen—her name I heard was Mary—was a *petite* fair woman, with a trustful nature and a sweet pretty face, and one of the loveliest babies I have ever met. Her name was Marjorie, and my heart went out to her at once. Some old bachelors have weaknesses—mine is a pretty baby.

We spent a very happy evening, and I left the Allens' house with regret; but not before I had received an invitation to come again, which I eagerly accepted, and a kiss from Marjorie.

After that I met the Allens many times. Through having no settled home I had many acquaintances, but few friends, and I found the little house at Kew more to my liking than the most gilded saloon bar in the West-End.

Mrs. Allen, too; how kind she was to me. There was nothing that little woman would not do; from mending my gloves to letting me help her transplant the rose tree.

In fact, at length, when Allen's leave was up and he went to rejoin his ship, I found myself, to my great consternation, thinking more of my friend's wife than I considered strictly in accordance with the views of society. The shock was so great to me, that on making the discovery I started at once for Paris, for I knew that there is no fool like an old fool.

From there I drifted onwards, and by degrees the little house at Kew faded from my memory, and was put away among the recollections of the past in the back of my brain somewhere. I had been to Japan, and thence to China, and after several months found myself in sun-baked Sydney. The leaves on the trees of the side walk were glimmering in the blaze of the sun, and unable to bear the glare, I stepped aside into a doorway that was nicely shaded and so looked less roasting than the others.

The door was open and the blinds of the house down. There was a kind of seat in the doorway, and I sat down upon it, too hot to go any further.

Suddenly, from the interior of the house, loomed a familiar figure. I stared a moment, and then recollection came to my aid.

It was Jack Allen!

I grasped his hand effusively, and felt as glad as possible to have met him, but somehow his greeting struck me as not so enthusiastic as I might have liked.

He seemed almost to be annoyed at meeting me.

Digitized by Google

"Well," I mused, "it is often so—out of sight out of mind."

"I was so hot, old chap, I took refuge on this seat, without a notion as to whose it was. How have you been?" I said, mopping my face.

"Well, very well, thanks. How are you?"

"And how's your wife?" Even then I hesitated over this question. I saw a distinct look of fear come into the man's eyes.

"She is quite well—indoors," he said slowly.

"Your wife here?" I cried. "Well, that is good. I should like to meet her."

"Yes, yes!" he said nervously. "But if you're rested we'll just step over to my office first—over that little business I told you of!"

And he ended his sentence in a loud key, as if for the benefit of someone inside.

"Certainly, certainly!" I replied vaguely, and, putting on my hat, "the sooner the better."

"Yes," said Allen in a low voice, "the sooner the better."

Feeling a mystery was in the air, yet quite unable to find the drift of it, I followed the young fellow down the baking street.

Suddenly he stopped and faced me.

"Can I trust you, Carter?" he said.

"My dear fellow, I am sure you can," I answered.

"Well, it's like this. I never expected to meet you out here, or I might have been prepared for it. But here you are, and I am not the man to cut a friend, no matter what I fear; but my wife, whom you will see when I go home with you, is not the one you met in London!"

I own I was rather dumfounded. With such a wife as Mary, here was this man living——

"Don't mistake me," he said, cutting my meditation short. "I love both women as truly as ever man did. You know I am capable of loving half creation. I love them both, and—Heaven help them!—they love me. I have married them both, and I am true and straight to them. Half my time I spend out here with Helen, half I spend in London with Mary. Two dearer girls never lived on this earth—and hanging is too good for me."

I felt really sorry for the young fellow. He was evidently so distressed.

"What an awful thing to have done!" I said. I could not help it. To think the man I believed as upright as myself was a bigamist!

"Of course, neither knows of the other," I said.

"Neither; each thinks she has my whole heart. I am heavily insured both out here and at home—one policy for her, one for Mary. I have done everything I can, but the life I lead is awful sometimes. Look what I have hanging over my head!"

"Yes, if they found it out they could inform against you."

"That wou'dn't matter. It would come out then that one was my wife and one not. The shock to my wife to find I had been faithless would be bad enough—but Heaven help the one who found she was no wife at all!"

We stood still in the sunshine. I did not know what to say.

"But come back, Carter. Helen will be pleased to see you, and the twins"—here he hesitated, and, I was glad to see, changed colour—"are ripping; you'll like them. But, remember, Helen's and Mary's peace of mind is more to me than my life—so I will trust you."

As much out of curiosity as anything, I went back, and was introduced to Mrs. Allen. She was a tall, slight girl, with a pale, oval face and scarlet lips, and her dark hair parted in the centre and covering her ears.

Novice as I was in woman's looks, I could not help but acknowledge that Allen had remarkable taste, and evidently liked a contrast, as nothing could have been wider apart in appearances than these two wives.

The twins, as he said, were ripping—two strapping boys of three years, with all the manly ways of their erring father and the beauty of their mother

I went back and was introduced to Mrs. Allen.

As I walked home that night I found myself wondering who was the wife and who wasn't, and somehow I hoped *she* wasn't. My sympathies were with the little girl in England. She had not the spirit of the Australian, and I felt sure the knowledge would kill her, were she ever to find out the truth

I did not stay long in Sydney, as my business was soon done, so taking a berth in the first ship I arrived in London some time before Allen, whose boat was the next but two after mine.

Instinctively, I was drawn towards Kew. I put it down to my fancy for the Hammersmith Road bar, but in my heart of hearts I knew better.

Mary was pleased to see me, and told me how dull she had been.

"That's the worst of having a husband like Jack. You only see him half the time, the other half he is away goodness knows where and up to goodness knows what! Not that I don't trust him. My Jack is as true as the day, I know, but really, a friend who knew him out in Sydney said he could easily have a wife out there and I should never know it; and really, Mr. Carter, so he might."

I felt I could break the head of the "friend" who said such a thing, but I only laughed.

Digitized by Google

"Yes; and you know what a man he is for pretty girls, don't you?" she added, laughing at the joke, whilst I felt a cold shiver run through me to hear her speak thus.

"Now you've seen him latest, Mr. Carter, how many wives had he got when you saw him?"

"Only about four," I answered easily.

She clapped her hands.

"Wait till he comes back, I'll tell him what you say."

"For goodness' sake don't," I said in consternation. "He might not like it."

"Oh, Jack is the best fellow in the world, he'll think it a great joke. By-the-bye, you haven't seen Marjorie, have you?"

And the rest of the evening passed away very pleasantly.

It must have been a year after this when I received a telegram in Paris from London, which ran:

"Come at once, Mary!" I read the missive through twice wondering what she, who was scarcely ever out of my thoughts, should send thus urgently for me.

Was Marjorie, my dear little girl as I call her, ill, dead, perhaps! But no, a second idea came into my mind, and came to stay.

She had heard of Helen!

Hastily concluding my business, I came home and drove straight to the little house at Kew,

The blinds were up, and inside, the gas, unprotected by any globe, flared in the evening breeze. Straw and paper littered the garden path, and a large van stood at the door. The house was open and I stepped in. Ready dressed, with her veil turned up over her little black bonnet, stood a ghost of my pretty Mary. Her face was white, and great rings surrounded her sweet grey eyes, that were filled even now with tears.

I came forward and took her hands in mine.

"Poor child," I said, seeing how broken she was.

"Mary," I said, taking her hands in mine, "will you trust me?"

"You know?" she asked, looking pitifully round.

"I guessed what it was."

"Have you known all this time?"

"Partly, not all."

"Oh, good Heaven, to think all these years I have never been his wife!"

"You have never been his wife?" I said, starting forward.

She shook her head most sadly.

"No, he married—her—first, and then met me. Oh, my poor Jack, and how I love you still!"

"Where are you going?" I asked, unable to say more on so painful a subject.

"I am going to stay with my sister for a while—goodness knows what will become of me afterwards. Look at me. Worse than that—look at Marjorie!"

I own I thought the future very dark for the poor girl.

"Mary," I said taking her hands in mine once more. "Will you trust me—I will be a good husband to you for ever and ever—I know I am no girl's fancy and am not much to look at, but I love you dearly, Mary."

She was silent a moment. Then she said:

"I couldn't—oh, I couldn't—I love him so much, I could never love anyone else in this world."

"I do not ask it," I said. "Marry me and I will make you a good husband. I know you can't love me. I am not worth loving. But you like me and I love you, and Marjorie shall be my little girl."

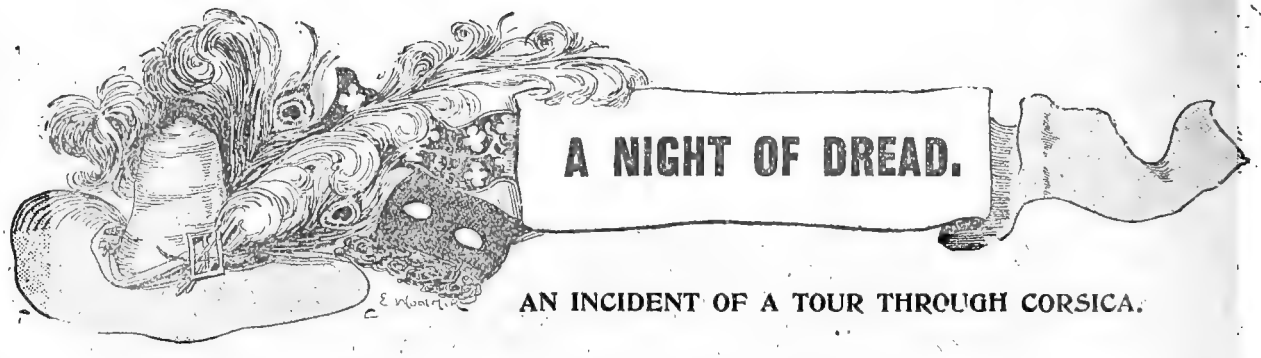
* * * * *

"And a better husband no girl ever had—and I certainly never deserved——"

Mary has just written this and insists on my leaving it in—so I have done so. You can judge for yourself if you know us.

Errol Stanhope.

Digitized by Google



A NIGHT OF DREAD.

AN INCIDENT OF A TOUR THROUGH CORSICA.

DOWN a long stony valley in the Corsican mountains two men were riding bicycles. They were Americans and were "doing Europe." Among other things, they had thought a bicycling tour in Corsica the correct thing to do; but half way through they very much wished they had not undertaken it. At the large towns of Ajaccio, Bastia and Corte they could get very good food and accommodation but the country inns were simply impossible, and ought not to have been called inns at all. Some black bread and a skinny chicken, killed while they waited, was their usual fare; no butter, no milk, no meat.

"What on earth do they live on themselves?" said Adolphus E. Ward to his friend, "they look healthy enough, too."

"Oh, stuff made of pounded chestnuts, I believe," said Henry Cardew, who was short and fat, "let's try it."

So they did, but soon repented, the chestnut polenta required an apprenticed taste. Down the stony ravines of the mountains, the principal roads were fairly good, they put up woodcock in several places and much regretted the guns they had left at Nice. Once a savage looking old boar charged across the road just in front of them, and disappeared among the maquis and arbutus bushes on the left. In the early mornings the wild myrtle of the maquis scented the air and attracted clouds of birds, who grew fat on the berries. They had a chart of all the cycleable roads in Corsica, and the stopping-places possible to sleep in, clearly marked, so there was no danger of losing their way.

It was December, the best month for an expedition of this kind. They had first crossed over from Nice to Ajaccio; it had been a very stormy night and for several hours the little steamer had to lay to, in case the force required to breast the waves should break her single screw. Henry Cardew had been very sea-sick indeed, and the French third class passengers of which there had been a great many on board, had howled and shrieked as if their last hour had surely come, and so no doubt they thought it had.

However, a few hours later than their advertised time they sighted the jagged edges of the Iles Sanguinaires, and after rounding them the rough water was left behind and they steamed up the lovely Bay of Ajaccio in comparatively smooth water. Then they just stayed two days in Ajaccio to recover their internal balance and also to enjoy the good living and comfort of the Continental Hotel. Then they started along the good road that crosses the Island to Bastia, and found it very hard work, for quite half way, it is a continued ascent, up to the snow line near Vizzavona. After that the road slopes easily down again to the Plains. The afternoon we saw the two bicyclists was a dull grey one worthy of England and her fogs and mist; no sign was to be seen of the brilliant sunshine of the Mediterranean islands, all was dull stone colour. They stopped at mid-day to eat the lunch packed in their knapsacks, and drink the whisky in their flasks.

"By Jove, I'm tired," said Cardew to his friend, "I don't know how it is, but you long skinny fellows can take much more exercise without getting so done up as fellows like me."

"Train a bit," said Adolphus, peaceably. "You're a long way too fat, my dear boy. By the way, just take out the map and see how much farther we've got to go to-day."

Harry Cardew took out the map and studied it carefully.

"There's a little place called Cuchilla only four miles off," he said at last, "and it has a house that calls itself a hotel, I see."

"Oh, they all do that out here," said Adolphus, "that doesn't count for much. Still, if it's marked on that chart at all, it must be fit to sleep in. I'm feeling rather tired, too, and I propose we go no farther than Cuchilla to-day, and put up there for the night."

Harry Cardew agreed, but as they had so short a way to go, they dawdled about where they were for some time longer and it was getting dark before they mounted their bicycles and went down the steep valley to Cuchilla.

"There are rather a rough lot of people in some of these out of the way Corsican places, you know," said Adolphus E. Ward, "a man in a shop at Ajaccio told me the brigands were by no means extinct in the country places."

"Well, we can't help it if the place is stuffed with them," said Harry Cardew stolidly, "brigands or no brigands, I don't go a yard further to-night if I know it. I'm thoroughly beat."

Just then two or three scattered houses came in sight; on a signboard on the right Bureau de Poste was written up, outside a kind of shed, and across the road was a house of three storeys high.

"This must be Cuchilla," said Harry Cardew, "look, there's a board of some kind over the door only it's so dirty, one can't read what's written on it."

They got off their bicycles before the entrance, unnoticed by anything but two pigs who were grubbing about, close to the step, and some goats and chickens, who evidently lived in the rooms on the ground floor.

"So do the pigs, I suppose," said Harry Cardew meditatively.

Digitized by Google

"Pigs do what?" said his friend, who was unstrapping his tool bag from the back of his seat.

"I say I suppose the pigs live in the hotel too," said Harry Cardew, disgustedly, "and the goats and the fowls."

"Of course they do," said his friend briskly, "good sign, if there are fowls there must be eggs about. Bang the door, there's a good chap.'

Harry Cardew obediently banged the door, but without getting any answer, then, as on looking in, they saw nothing but a stone cellar and a staircase leading up to the floor above, they left their bicycles below and ascended it. On the first floor they heard a sound of voices, so they again knocked at one of the doors. This time an old woman appeared and made signs to them to come into the kitchen, where there was a table in front of a large wood fire, with bottles of red country wine on it and several rough looking men sitting round.

One man came forward, evidently the proprietor of the inn, who could speak something more like French than the usual Corsican *patois*, and after some feeble remarks in bad French, the Americans made him understand they wanted supper and two beds for the night and a place in which to stand their machines. This last request evidently puzzled their host very much, so they went downstairs with him and brought up the bicycles to the first floor, where he put them in a little parlour off the kitchen. Then he took the two young men up another flight of stairs to a poor looking attic with two beds.

"All right," said Harry Cardew, "this must do whether we like it or not, and now ask him if he can get us something fit to eat."

Adolphus was the spokesman always and he rather enjoyed showing off his superior French, which, as a matter of fact, was very feeble indeed. He asked for water to wash their hands in before dinner, a request which the man evidently thought very unreasonable. However after a long interval of waiting, he reappeared with a broken lipped jug of water and one very small basin, but no towel.

"However one can't expect too much at one go," Harry Cardew remarked as he dried his hands on his pocket handkerchief.

Then they went downstairs again to the kitchen and were offered very hard black bread and some stewed meat, off what animal it was impossible to determine.

"I should say a hard worked donkey," said Adolphus E. Ward, pensively, as he vainly tried to saw bits off the steak.

"I think it's goat myself," said Harry Cardew, "and died of some disease probably, I shall keep to the bread and cheese. The cheese isn't half bad, it's like the red American sort at home."

Being young and hungry they made a fairly good meal off the food set before them; the other men looked on sullenly and left soon after they came in, one by one.

"I don't much like the look of our host, do you, Harry?" said Adolphus, in a low tone.

"Not particularly," said the youth, calmly, "but what's the odds? We have two beds and we leave here tomorrow morning. Come let's go to bed now, I'm jolly tired."

So they picked up the oil lamp from the table and wishing their host a civil good-night, to which he responded only by a grunt, they went upstairs. There was no fastening to their door, so they moved one of the bedsteads against it, undressed and went to bed, and were soon fast asleep. The night went on, as nights usually do.

Adolphus E. Ward was a light sleeper and he suddenly woke up with the acute feeling we all have had sometimes, that someone was near. Creak, creak, stealthily some footsteps were creeping up the stairs. By stretching out one long leg, he was able to kick his companion in the face, an attention by no means appreciated and which occasioned some low toned remarks, unfit for publication. But just then Harry Cardew also heard the creaking footsteps, and they both sat up and seized their boots, their only weapons of defence. The steps stopped outside their door.

"One at least must be killed," said a whisper, in a man's gruff voice, carefully subdued.

"It is a pity," said in French, another person, a woman, "but yes, it is necessary."

"Which say you, the long and thin one, or the little fat?"

"The long and thin," was the answer, "he will give the greater profit."

"I say the little fat," said again the woman's whisper.

("Blood hirsty brute," muttered Harry Cardew.)

"But why not both," said the man, "it is easy, they are both asleep, one screw of the neck and it is finished."

"Ah, Joseph," sighed the woman, "it is murder, but yes, I will do it—softly, they stir."

Then the steps crept away from the door. Adolphus E. Ward and Harry Cardew sat on their beds, boots in hand, awaiting the murderous attack, from what side they knew not, perhaps the wall on one side was hollow, perhaps there was a hidden door, who could tell? So they sat there waiting till the faint blue-bell tints of morning crept up the Eastern sky. Still they did not dare to sleep, perhaps from a hole in the wall their enemies were watching for their opportunity.

Yet nothing happened. At eight o'clock they put their boots on their feet and boldly walked down the stairs. The proprietor's wife, a young woman they had not seen the night before, came forward, and smilingly said breakfast would soon be ready.

"Look out for poison," said Harry Cardew gloomily, "it was her whispering last night."

They waited in the little parlour off the kitchen. The sun shone, the pigs squeaked cheerfully outside. Soon the proprietress came in, bearing in triumph on a dish on which reposed the skinny carcase of an ancient fowl.

"There, messieurs," she said proudly, "is he not fine? My husband would have killed rather the young one, but there is more flavour in this. Last night we discussed the matter at length before deciding he must be slaughtered. Ah, my dear friend Coco," she added affectionately, "never shall I hear you cackle again."

Ward and Cardew looked at each other rather shamefacedly and then burst out laughing.

"You killed him in the night, Madame?" said Adolphus.

"But yes," she sighed, "he slept in the loft near your room, poor cherished one, he slept, and with one screw of the neck his life was gone. We feared to disturb messieurs, but no doubt, fatigued, you slept well."

"Oh, yes, thanks, we slept very well indeed," said Harry Cardew hastily. "I say Adolphus Ward, you are a flat."

But Adolphus E. Ward made no answer, he was masticating the defunct Coco. SADI GRANT.

Digitized by Google

Briton or Boer?

By GEORGE GRIFFITH.

INTRODUCTION.

For years past Britain and the Transvaal have been spoiling for a fight, and it was left to that well-known author, Mr. George Griffith, to write this strong and exciting serial nearly four years ago graphically describing a huge war between the two countries.

The story, coming so soon after the Jameson Raid, was read with unusual interest.

Now that Briton and Boer are in deadly conflict it will be interesting to read the story, and see how far the imagination of the author has actually come true.

SUMMARY OF OPENING CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.—The scene opens on the Rand. It is the eve of Amajuba day, and a State ball is being given. To this comes Prince Paul Rexna, a Polish nobleman, and his daughter, Princess Vavara. They are introduced to Dr. Leyds.

CHAPTER II.—Dr. Leyds returns to Pretoria to attend a midnight consultation at the Government buildings. The Prince's rooms are in the Grand Hotel opposite. By tapping the wires, which cross the street at this point, the Prince and his daughter overhear all that goes on, and telegraph the result by secret code to Europe.

CHAPTERS III. AND IV.—Amajuba day dawns. The Secretary accompanies the Prince and Princess to Krugersdorp where, from the base of the Monument of Independence, the President makes a great proclamation. The Convention of London is abrogated, the absolute independence of the South African Republic is declared; the President unfurls a Union Jack and rends it to pieces. So the storm bursts!

CHAPTERS V. AND VI.—On the following day Major-General Carrington learns at Buluwayo that all the wires have been cut between Rhodesia and the south and east. He concludes that this is due to Boer hostility, and prepares to meet it. Meanwhile a powerful British squadron appears unexpectedly in Delagoa Bay, and Lieutenant Ferris is sent ashore to take possession of the telegraph station.

CHAPTERS VII. AND VIII.—A Russian squadron is in the Bay at the same time. The flagship *Navarin* fires on the British destroyer *Thrasher*. Admiral Dale takes this as an act of war. There is a battle and the Russian squadron is defeated and captured. Michael Ostroff seeks to escape in the *Sokol*. He is taken prisoner, and important dispatches are found in his possession. Admiral Dale calls a council of war.

CHAPTER IX.

ROUNDING UP THE REBELS.

"BUST me, Jack, if old Fighting Fred hasn't got the niggers this time! Lawd love us, did you see that shell? plumb centre in the middle of the impy! Good old B Battery! That's the place to put 'em. Let her go! There's another on the left horn, and another, and another. Gawd, 'ow they serve those guns! Hope the beggars don't do a guy before we can get a chance at 'em."

"Shut up, you blighted idiot! If your eyes were as wide open as your mouth is you'd see the vermin crawling round the shoulder of that kopje. Look! Up yonder to the left! Ah! Got him in once. Take the next, Ned; see what they mean? They want to get behind us. Good! The other chaps 've got on to them. Steady and straight, lads, and we'll show them how to turn the flank of the 'K' boys. Put yer head down, Mike, you bally idiot; what were rocks made for? Lawd he's got it! I'll bet my old barker to a peashooter no kaffir ever fired that shot. There, take that and go home you blacked-up Dutchman."

"Well shot, Jacky boy! Six hundred yards if it was an inch! Those bally Boers won't have much to teach us in the shooting line when we do meet 'em. That chap never kicked before he dropped. Ah! Good again! See the rock fly! That shell was as good as six, and that's what the Boers 'll find out when they get lying down beyond the stones and thinking that we're going to run up to them and get shot down like sheep, like those poor chaps at Laing's Nek did. Seven pounder melinites at four thousand yards is what they want, and by the Great Scoop, they'll get 'em."

"Hope so, sure, Ned. There'll be more sport in it, anyhow, than this nigger-hunting, and it's coming soon, too, for this game won't last much longer. Freddy's got 'em this time. They never thought they were going to get anything like this rush through the mountains and bein' jammed up in a mantrap like this. Good old screw-guns! That's the way. See 'em scatter down the kopje with the rocks after 'em. I thought so! Right down to the veld! Let 'em go! Sharpshooting made easy! Hooray! There goes the bugle! Put on the toasting-forks. Bullet and bayonet is the word now, Ned. Down we go!"

The foregoing conversation took place seven days after the news of the cutting of the wires had come to Buluwayo, between Troopers John Hinton and Edward Dempsey of Macfarlane's "K" troop of horse as they lay side by side behind a sheltering ridge of stones on the slope of a hill a little to the north of the Nuanetzi river down towards the angle where the river and the old Pioneer Road join at Nuanetzi township.

The hills here meet in a somewhat sharp curve, and about midway between the two ranges there is a kopje, or isolated hill, which Sir Frederick Carrington, or "Fighting Freddy," as his men affectionately termed him when out of ear-shot, had purposely left unoccupied, when, after six days hard marching and skirmishing, he had hunted the Matabele and their Mashona allies out of their retreats in the Matoppo hills and driven them down, mile by mile, into the *cul de sac* between the Nuanetzi and the Lundi which he intended to be the final scene of the war so far as the rebel kaffirs were concerned.

He had left one road, and one only, open—that which led through a chain of hills that ran from north-east to south-west across the plain. They had passed through this by night unmolested and confident of forcing their way over the Pioneer Road and into the wild Amaduma country beyond, but when morning dawned they found the hills lined with sharpshooters and every outlet guarded by the terrible little "loud-speakers" and the long "big-talkers," and it was just after sunrise on this particular morning that Troopers Hinton and Dempsey exchanged sentiments to the accompaniment of the cracking of rifles, the "spat-

Digitized by Google

spat" of the bullets on the stones, and the bang and whistle and crash of the shell-fire, about half-an-hour after "the circus had opened," as Trooper Dempsey put it.

The Matabele, seeing themselves surrounded, had instinctively fallen back into their old formation, and were preparing to rush the hills to the eastward, feeling that there, and there alone, lay their only chance of escape. There were between ten and twelve thousand of them, and as the bugle rang out they had formed up under the shelter of the isolated kopje, and were swinging out in their crescent-shaped formation round the shoulder of the hill, fairly well covered by the brushwood.

The last notes had scarcely died away when every man of the "K" troop had loosed the knee-halter of his horse and was picking his way down through the stones, with the bridle on his left arm and his rifle lying across it, ready for instant use. Across the valley they could see other men and horses picking their way down, and stopping every now and then, as they did, to take a chance shot at a black shape crawling among the rocks, or to reply in kind to a bullet that came singing out of a cloud of smoke behind a stone.

Then when they reached practicable ground the halt was called, and every man stood by his horse ready to shoot or ride as the order might come. Meanwhile, the long brown crescent of the Matabele warriors, alive with plumes and waving spears, and guns and shields, was swinging round the base of the kopje to the left, and flowing in a torrent of desperate valour towards the slopes of the eastern hills, and to the right of the kopje another line, some twelve or fifteen hundred strong, was moving up the valley to intercept the threatened charge of the troopers.

"It'll be half-a-dozen volleys and up an' at 'em, Ned, you see."

"Yes, bayonet and pepper-box against assegai and shield, and pretty warm work it'll be, too, when we get to close quarters, for those black devils mean do or die this time, seeing it's get through or kingdom come for them—if they have a kingdom come."

"That's it, Jack. Here comes Mac. Thought so! Six volleys and shoot low, then mount *and* at 'em. Good-bye, Jacky boy, if I don't see you again. Remember me at home if you get there and I don't. This is going to be a blazing hot half-hour."

"By-bye, Ned, and do the same for me if I get an assegai between the ribs and you don't. O reservoir, old man! Now then, let her go and shoot straight, and don't aim at the same nigger as me. We've no lead to waste."

The two chums shook hands.

The two chums shook hands, as many another pair of good chums did about the same time, for, as Trooper Hinton had remarked, the next half-hour or so bade fair to be blazing hot. The Matabele outnumbered them some six to one, and were coming on as though they meant business. When they were about twelve hundred yards away the long rifle-barrels dropped across the saddles, and the fire and smoke began to spurt from the muzzles up and down the line across the valley.

At the first discharge the Matabeles stopped, and about a fourth of them threw themselves upon the ground, and flashes of flame jumped up from among the grass, and bullets came singing and hissing over the troopers' heads. Then they sprang up and made another rush forward, and again the rifles spoke—this time with better effect than before, for some of those who lay down didn't get up again.

The bayonets drove through the tough shields.

Then for four more rounds it was load and fire as fast as aim could be taken, then, almost as one man, troops "K," "G," and "F," swung up into the saddle, the bugle sang out its message, and, with revolver in the left hand and bayoneted rifle in the right, they raced away in a long, close line on to the solid advancing mass of the Matabele.

They were met with wonderful coolness and steadiness — a coolness and steadiness which betokened something better than native drill and discipline. The three or four hundred who were armed with rifles ran out in front of the line, dropped to the ground when they were about three hundred yards off, and let go a volley that emptied a score of saddles and wounded twice as many horses. Then the rest charged forward over the prostrate bodies, swinging their spears and waving their shields.

At twenty yards the spears began to fly and the revolvers to crack, and then footmen closed with horsemen; the short, heavy-headed stabbing assegai clove its way into the breasts and flanks of the rearing, screaming horses, and the weighted bayonets drove down through the tough shields, and through bone and muscle behind them. The dusky braves clutched at bridle and mane and ears, and by sheer weight and strength dragged many a horse to its knees and rolled many a rider on the grass never to get up again.

But at last the deadly six-shooters and the swift-stabbing bayonets did their work, and the troopers began to forge ahead. Little more than three-fourths of their number got clear on the other side of the dusky line, but they re-formed in an instant, loaded their rifles, poured a point blank volley from the saddle into the broken-up masses of the Matabele, and then charged in again, this time riding clear through them.

Then to their rear from the eastward there came the sharp thudding roar of the Maxims, the dull banging of the seven-pounders and the shrill crash of the bursting shells. At the familiar but dreaded sound the Matabele wavered for a moment, and then broke and run, only to be ridden down and bayoneted and shot by the now infuriated troopers. But the maxim bullets and the shells were not for them. The main impi had by this time reached the foot of the eastern hill-slope and was making a gallant but useless stand against the storm of fire and hail of lead that was raining down upon them.

"Halt, lads, and see to the wounded for a bit. You'll not be wanted yet," Captain Macfarlane shouted as he rode along the straggling line of panting horses and powder-blackened, blood-bespattered men. "Let the Maxims get their work in, and then we'll take them in the rear."

Then the line broke up, and men went to look for dead and wounded chums and comrades, and do what they could for those who could still be helped. Dead horses were pulled off the crushed limbs of wounded men; others, kicking and writhing on the ground, got a revolver bullet under the ear to end their misery; limp, blood-stained forms were lifted tenderly by strong, gentle hands, and carried away to the shade; water-bottles were unslung,

Digitized by Google

and flasks came out, and presently field-surgeons came galloping up with splints and bandages, and so the work of healing and friendship went on to the strange accompaniment of the grim music of death until the roar of the guns began to slacken.

Then the bugle sounded again, rifles and revolvers were loaded, and every man who could ride got back into the saddle, the line was re-formed, and with a last glance backwards at the dead and wounded, the troopers trotted down the valley and round the left shoulder of the kopje. As they rounded it a frightful scene came into view. Of the eight or ten thousand Matabele who had made up the impi that had charged the fatal slopes, scarcely half were left alive, the rest lay scattered about, bullet-riddled and shell-mangled on the bloody grass, amidst the splintered trees and brushwood. Those left alive were making for the kopje at the top of their speed, as the General had intended they should before the battle began.

Suddenly the firing stopped altogether, the bugles rang out again, and a long straggling line of nearly twelve hundred horsemen, composed of companies of Mounted Infantry, Hussars, Lancers, Cape Mounted Rifles, Cape Boys, and the Rhodesia Horse—which, true to time, Sir Richard Martin had brought down from Salisbury by the Victoria road—rode out of the trees amidst which the Maxims and seven-pounders had been planted, and, forming up into their respective squads, charged with lance and bayonet and revolver into the midst of the flying Matabele.

Trooper Hinton nursing a leg that had an assegai driven into it.

At the same moment troops "K," "G," and "F" swung round their flank, cutting off their way of escape to the plain.

Some turned and died in a fashion well worthy the blood of the old Amazulu, stabbing and clubbing and dragging men from their horses, and bringing their kerries down on their heads with the last effort of their lives; but most of them ran for the shelter of the trees on the kopje as fast as their legs would carry them, flinging their arms and shields away as they went.

At the foot of the kopje the pursuit stopped, for even "Fighting Freddy" had no heart to shed more blood than was necessary; so the bugle sounded the halt, and the different companies were divided into squads and picketed within sight of each other all round the hill, and the Maxims were brought down and posted so as to sweep all its lower slopes. Lastly, the mountain batteries that had been brought with infinite labour from Buluwayo were run out and placed in conspicuous positions as a gentle hint to the Matabele that, unless they surrendered pretty promptly, means might be taken to persuade them.

"I hope these black beggars 'll see things in a reasonable and natural way," said Trooper Dempsey to his chum about midday, when all the arrangements had been made, and they had finished comparing casualties. "We don't want to stop here a week, you know. Those ain't the chaps we've got to fight. It's them 'airy-faced, unwashed, biltong-chewin' sons of guns down yonder, and every hour we're kept here the stronger they'll be gettin' on the frontier, bust 'em!"

"Yes, that's so, old man," replied Trooper Hinton, tenderly nursing a leg that had had an assegai driven about three inches into it. "Our work ain't here now; it's down yonder, and thundering hard work it's going to be, you believe me."

"You can bet your ugly face on that! Give us a fill and pass your flask; mine's empty."

CHAPTER X.

A Black Dutchman.

The afternoon passed away without any further incident than the ordinary operations of camp life under the given conditions. The dead were buried in the valley with all due honours, the wounded were cared for in the field hospital that had been promptly established. Men with lighter hurts got them made comfortable, weapons were cleaned, artillery overhauled, camp kitchens made ready, and all due preparations made for a "blooming picnic," as Private James Anson, of the 17th Lancers, better known as "Jumping Jimmy," from his extraordinary activity, tersely put it.

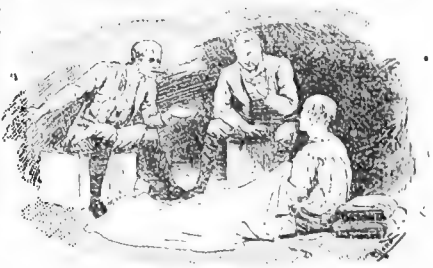
His right fist shot out from the shoulder.

But if it was a picnic to the men, it was anything but that to the officers. On the contrary, it was a most anxious time, for during the six days' campaign rumours had kept flying up from the South with that marvellous rapidity of transmission which is characteristic of all higher savage races, and all these were substantially to the same effect—white men armed with long guns and dragging "little loud-speakers" and "big-talkers" with them were coming up from the south and taking possession of the drifts, or river-fords, occupying the most difficult parts of the road, and, worse than all, creeping up on Puri and towards the Mangwe Pass.

There could be no doubt now who they were, for they could be none other than the Boers; but there all certainty ended.

Had there been a formal declaration of war, or were the Boers doing as they did at Bronkhurst Spruit in 1881, when they murdered sixty-nine, and severely wounded eighty-three, unarmed men of the 94th regiment as they were marching into Pretoria with unloaded rifles and ammunition screwed up in the boxes on the waggons?

Was the Imperial Government alive to the situation, and sending troops from England and India, or would it wait for another Laing's Nek and Amajuba before the Empire put forth its strength? Or had the secret treaty with Germany which Dr. Leyds had brought back with him from Berlin, when he went to have his throat seen to, come into effect, and, if so, was England so far embroiled in complications at home that she could send no adequate aid to the loyalists of South Africa?



They woke up Trooper Hinton.

These were the questions which, with many a one like them, were anxiously debated by the leaders of the little

Digitized by Google

force on the Nuanetzi as they lay round the kopje waiting for the rebels to surrender. It was true that matters might have been hastened by shelling the woods and rocks, but in view of the work that was to be done, there was no ammunition to spare for this. The impi might have been turned out at the point of the bayonet, but then honourable members would have got up in the House of Commons and asked spitefully humanitarian questions about butchery of unarmed natives, quite regardless of the fact that these gentle savages had been amusing themselves for months past with the looting and burning of stores and homesteads and the torture and butchery of men, women, and children.

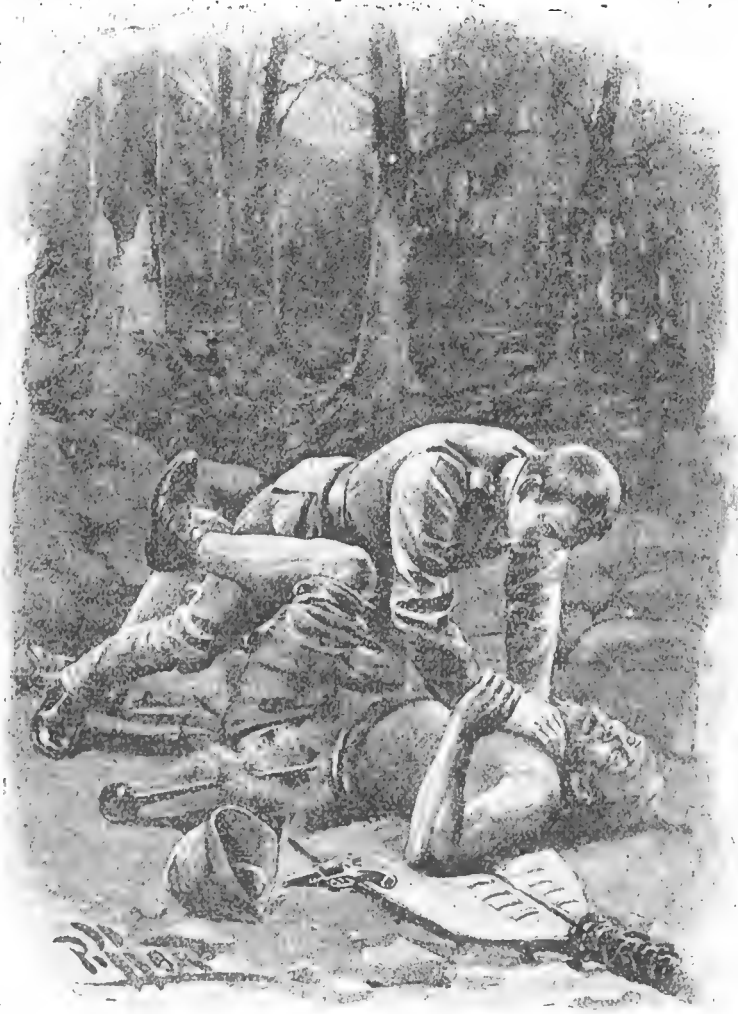
Added to this there was another reason why General Carrington desired a general and unconditional surrender in preference to turning the rebels out by force, and this reason was made apparent later on, in somewhat unexpected fashion, through the agency of our two friends, Ned Dempsey, of the "K" troop, and Private James Anson, of the Lancers.

These two, as it happened, were Cockneys to the soles of their boots, and, more than that, old acquaintances in their unregenerate days before they exchanged the wilds of the Mile End Road for the wilderness of South Africa.

"K" troop was stationed next to the Lancers, and "Jumping Jimmy" had accepted an invitation to supper. At nightfall the sentries were doubled, and a ring of great fires blazed all round the kopje. Between these the sentries walked to and fro, but in consequence of the smallness of the force and the great extent of the circle to be guarded the sentries were somewhat few and far between considering the bush craft and cunning of those they had to confine to the hill.

It was a clear moonless night, and Trooper Dempsey and Private Anson, having tucked up Trooper Hinton and his game leg for the night, went out for a stroll and a last pipe behind the lines before turning in for the night, as their sentry-go wouldn't come round till sunrise. Their troops were stationed on the south side of the kopje, and about a mile away to the southward was a low range of sparsely-wooded hills, on the other side of which flowed the Nuanetzi.

They were strolling towards these hills deeply engrossed in such talk as a couple of thorough-bred Cockneys might be expected to indulge in under such circumstances, and their thoughts were far away in the "little village"—in fact they were both standing, in the spirit, at the bar of an East-end hostelry well known to both—when Trooper Dempsey, whether from long habit of watchfulness, bred of much campaigning in the wilderness, or by some idle, unaccountable impulse, happened to turn his head round.



Trooper Dempsey had jumped on to his man and was choking him.

The next instant a muttered oath in the pungent vernacular of the Mile End Road broke from his lips, his right fist shot out from his shoulder and landed snugly under the chin of a tall Kaffir who had risen like a ghost from the grass, and was in the act of bringing his knob-kerrie down on Private Anson's forage cap, which he was wearing in the cool of the night instead of his helmet.

The Kaffir's teeth clashed together, his head went back, and he tumbled over sideways with a dislocated jaw.

At the same moment Private Anson whipped his revolver out and wheeled round just in time to cover another black, half-naked figure that had risen to its knees and was pointing a heavy Colt six-shooter at Trooper Dempsey. The Lancer's revolver cracked first, and the figure rolled backwards, sending a bullet into the air as it went.

Meanwhile Trooper Dempsey had jumped on to his man, and was choking him, quietly but firmly, into insensibility, and in a few seconds more Private Anson was kneeling on the stomach of the man he had shot, as he soon discovered, clean through the right shoulder. He was groaning and writhing with the pain of his wound and the unpleasant pressure of a pair of bony knees on his midriff, and, not a little to his surprise, the Lancer heard the word "*Allemagtig!*" come, half-spoken and half-groaned, through his clenched teeth. He let out a little low whistle of surprise, and then he said:

Digitized by Google

"Have you settled that josser, matey?"

"'Alf a tick, Jimmy, and I'll have the belt round his elbows and a puttie round his legs, and then I'm with you. What's up? Did you kill that nigger with the shooter?"

"Nigger be sugared! This ain't no blooming nigger, unless they've been learning lately to cuss as well as shoot in Dutch, and he ain't dead, neither, though I've got him fair through the right shoulder. Lie down, bust you, or I'll save you the rope to-morrow and throttle you right away. Here, let's see what colour the Lawd made yer."

Private Anson possessed a good deal more of the bulldog courage of the British Tommy than he did of refinement in the use of ways and means, so he just spat in his hand and rubbed it hard on the cheek of his captive. When he took it away there was a broad, dirty grey streak down the side of the man's face.

"Come here, Ned, and look at this," he said in a voice a little husky with excitement. "If you and me doesn't get a stripe apiece for this night's work, there ain't no justice in the British Army. I know'd this wurn't no nigger. He's a blooming Dutch spy, that's what he is—one of them bally Dutchmen wot's been teaching the kaffirs to shoot straight, and giving them Lee-Metfords and cartridges. Strike a match, and let's have a good look at him."

"'Strewth, matey, but you're right," Trooper Dempsey half whispered as he held the flickering light of the wax match over the face of the prostrate man, who had now opened his eyes, and was rolling them from one to the other. "He's no more a Kaffir than I am. I wonder what his little lay was?"

"His little lay?" echoed Private Anson, with a tinge of scorn in his voice. "Here, take my putties off and tie him up while I hold him down, and, I'll tell yer. Can't yer see?" he went on as Trooper Dempsey began to unroll the long strips of cloth which encased his nether limbs from the knee down. "He's managed to sneak through the line somehow with this Kaffir, and the Kaffir, knowing the country better nor you know your prayers, 'ud have took him across the river and guided him as straight as a bee line, as the Yanks say, to where them pals of his is on the frontier, and he'd have given the whole show away if he'd once 'ave got there.

"Yer see this is what the General was waiting for. We could have chucked the niggers out of the kopje right enough, but he knowed there was Dutchmen among 'em, so he wanted to cop the whole kit of 'em and catch the Dutchmen *corpus delicty*, as I heard a lawyer sa once about a burglar as the coppers had nailed 'alf in and 'alf out of a kitchen window."

"Well, strike me pink!" exclaimed Trooper Dempsey, as the truth d wned upon him. "I should never have tumbled to that in a blue moon. Why, if these chaps had got clear away, they'd have brought the Dutchmen up in no time on them quick-stepping, scraggy little 'orses of theirs, and they'd have caught us here in this valley like a regular man-trap, while we was picnicing round this blooming kopje, waiting for the niggers to come out.

"There y'are. Now he's 'elpless as a 'obbled hostrich, and there's the chaps coming from camp at last to see what the row's about. Come on, mateys," he shouted to a dozen dark forms that were hurrying through the long grass and stumpey bushes towards them. "Come on; you don't want yer guns. We've got a half-dead nigger with a broken jaw and a black Dutchman with a bullet in him for you to carry back. Some thick-eyed idiot as thought he was a sentry let 'em through from the kopje. Gawd help him if Freddy spots him; but, 'strewth, won't the General be glad to see this chap!"

Trooper Dempsey never came nearer to the unadulterated truth than he did when he made this last remark. The General was pleased when the real and the sham Kaffirs were carried on crossed rifles into camp, and the adventure was reported to him. He was so pleased that he confined himself to a bare three minutes of expletives with reference to the sentry who had let them through; then he ordered half the troops to patrol the whole circuit of the kopje for three hours, and then to be relieved by the other half until daylight, when he intended to take sharp and decisive measures to end a situation which the exploit of Trooper Dempsey and Private Anson had proved to be of a very serious character indeed.

The Kaffir-Dutchman he sent away at once to be washed and have his wound attended to, directing him to be brought before him at daybreak the next morning. He paid the two heroes of the exploit a brief but meaning compliment on their luck and the promptness with which they had turned it to account, and sent them off to turn in before their sentry-go came round, instead of which they went and woke up Trooper Hinton, and promptly set him swearing with envy by glowing and much-debated accounts of how the whole thing happened, for, of course, by this time each had naturally got his own version of the adventure, and the more they thrashed out the details, and the more pipes they filled and emptied and the more of the readily-offered flasks they pulled at, the more widely did the two versions differ from each other, until at length the one adventure had become two, and the heroes of it were scarcely on speaking terms.

(To be continued.)

WAR PICTURES.

The Story of the War told in Pictures.

Do not fail to give an order to your Newsagent to-day.

ORDER IT!!!

Each weekly part contains fifty or more pictures secured at a cost of many hundreds of pounds.

2d. EVERY WEDNESDAY. **2d.**

WAR PICTURES.

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES ABOUT THE WAR.

We devote, every week, two pages of *Short Stories* to pithy, humourous anecdotes similar to those which appear in these columns. A prize of £1 1s. will be sent to the reader who submits the best storyette this week, and a copy of H. B. Vogel's "Maori Maid," to each of those whose attempts are used. The anecdotes may be either original or selected; in the latter case the source *must* be stated. The prize of One Guinea offered for the best Storyette in this competition has been won this week by Mr. A. Hutton, of 3 Lanage Street, Bradford. Attempts for this week's prize should deal with WAR ANECDOTES and must reach the Storyette Editor, *Short Stories* Office, Henrietta Street, Strand, London, W.C., by Monday, March 19th. Post-cards only, please.

A Scotch Reservist.

SCENE: Suburban train up north. Two passengers discussing South African situation.

First Passenger: "Man alive, ye hae nae patriotism aboot ye ava, or ye widna talk in that strain!"

Second Passenger (pro-Boer): "You see, sir, not being a soldier, I am not forced to be patriotic. Many of our Reserves are not patriotic, either, but have to appear to be."

First Passenger: "G'wa wi' ye, ye're haverin'! Only the ither day I heard o' a Reserve man laid up for repairs wha had tae be strappit down while a bloke in the street persisted in soondin' a bugle!"

A. H.

Answered.

NOT long ago a venerable Pat landed for the first time on Chinese soil. Soon he was surrounded by natives, who began to chatter a broken sort of English.

Pat, who was quick-tempered, was not long before he aimed at one of them with a dish which he seized from a shop close by.

A Chinaman's face was badly cut, and Pat was soon brought before the English Consul.

"Why have you done this?" demanded the Consul, to which Pat replied:

"Och! sure the ugly haythens spake broken English, so I gave them broken china in return."

W. S.

Lucky for the Officer.

AN officer went into a barber's shop the other day for a shave. The barber had just gone out, and the boy, expecting him back soon, had lathered the officer; but as the minutes went by and he did not return, the officer grew impatient, and asked the lad if he could shave him.

"I'll try," was the cautious reply.

Whereupon the officer, thinking to frighten the lad, drew his sword and laid it before him, saying sternly:

"Well, try; but if you cut me, I shall cut off your head."

The boy went over it carefully, and finished without mishap.

The officer, after examining his face in the glass, turned to the lad, and said:

"Well, my lad, and weren't you frightened?"

"No," was the reply; "I meant having first go. If I had cut you, I should have cut you properly."

J. D. L.

Prophetic.

SOME years ago a gentleman in Liverpool, who had the misfortune to lose his nose, was followed by an Irish beggarwoman, who kept exclaiming, "Heaven preserve your honour's eyesight!"

The gentleman was at last irritated by her importunity, and said, "Why do you wish my eyesight to be preserved? Nothing ails my eyesight, nor is likely to do."

"No, your honour," said the Irishwoman; "but it will be a sad thing if it does, for you will have nothing to rest your spectacles upon!"

E. W. B.

A Bragging Match.

A PARISIAN paper relates the following story of a contest in boasting, which, it says, took place between three artists of Marseilles. It should be explained that Parisian writers always put their "tall talk" into the mouths of Marseilles people.

"My dear sir," said one of the artists, "yesterday I painted a pine board in imitation of marble, and did it with such fidelity that when the board was put into a pond of water it sank like a stone."

"Pooh!" said the second, "that is nothing. Yesterday I happened to hang up my thermometer on the back of the frame of my 'View in the Arctic Regions,' and the mercury instantly went down to twenty degrees below zero."

"All that is nothing at all," said the third artist. "You know my portrait of the old Marquis of Camargne? Well, it is so life-like that it has to be shaved three times a week!"

E. E. H.

Really Extraordinary.

Two Irishmen got a job to clean some lofty windows.

Having no ladder, however, that would reach the windows, they were rather puzzled how to get to them.

"Pat," said Mike, "I have it. Get a plank, put it through the window. Oi'll sit on the plank outside and you sit on the plank inside."

All went well until Mike at the outside cried out:

"Oi let the window-leather fall."

"All right," again replied Pat; "stop where yez are, and Oi'll git it."

Away went Pat downstairs, and getting into the street, exclaimed:

"Be jabers, Mike, you're here first? Which way did you come?"

F. M. W.

Digitized by Google

Corroborative Detail.

A German, being pursued by a policeman, ran into the shop of a friend who was a crockery merchant and hid himself in a bag.

The policeman coming in after him knocked on all the bags and baskets to find out where he was.

When he came to the bag where the German was hid he knocked and not hearing the rattle of china said:

"The German must be in here, for if it was china it would go 'tinkle, tinkle.'"

"Dingle, dingle," said the German inside.

A. L. R.

Beyond His Means.

A certain beggar in a large town has quite a regular staff of almsgivers. On a recent occasion this man accosted one of his patrons as usual, and received from him half-a-crown.

The beggar took it, thanked the donor, but apparently seemed dissatisfied.

"Well, what is it?" said the gentleman.

"It is this, sir. Every month for years past you have given me five shillings, but to-day you give me only half-a-crown. How is that?"

"Well, I'll tell you," said the gentleman smiling good-humouredly. "I have had some unusually heavy expenses this month. My eldest daughter has married, and the outlay for her trousseau has compelled me to retrench in every direction."

"Ah, yes, I see," said the begger. "But, sir, I really can't afford to contribute anything toward your daughter's wedding expenses."

E. A. M.

The Joke that Saved His Life.

A poor widow, in a West-of-England village, used to fatten a pig every year, and this was her only meat supply.

One year, about a month before "piggy" was fit for the knife, it was taken ill, and fearing it would die, the poor woman was in great trouble, and she sent for the vicar, and stated her sad case to him, saying:

"Oh, paason, my poor peg be main bad, and Oi be afraid 'eel die, an' Oi shan't 'ave a mossel o' mate vur a yur. Do ee pray vor'n to live—do ee."

This was a puzzler for the vicar; he felt for the widow, but he didn't like to pray for a pig. But a "happy thought" struck him, and going to the sty he looked as solemn as he could, and said in deep tones:

"O pig, if thou livest, thou livest; but if thou diest, thou diest."

The poor widow thanked him heartily. Fortunately the pig lived, which was a great comfort to the poor old woman, who firmly believed the "paason's" prayer had wrought the cure.

Some time after, the vicar was very ill with quinsy, and was thought to be dying. Upon hearing this, the widow begged so earnestly to be allowed to see him, that at last her request was granted.

Going to the bedside, with tears streaming down her aged cheeks, she sobbed aloud:

"Oh, paason, I be main zorry vor ee! Oh, paason, if thou livest, thou livest; if thou diest, thou diest."

This so amused the vicar that, remembering the pig incident, he laughed so heartily that it broke the quinsy and his life was saved!

R. T.

No Watch Needed.

"My father," said the small boy to the friend who was calling on his mother, "is a great man. He knows what time it is without even looking at his watch."

"What do you mean, Tommy?" queried the visitor

"Oh, when I holler out an' ask him what time it is in the morning, he always says it's:

"'Time to get up.'

"An' when I ask him what time it is in the evenin' he always says:

"'Time to go to bed, Tommy.'

"Oh, I tell you my father is a great man!"

J. K.

He "Surrhounded" Them.

Private Mike McGeever had been out foraging, and had been chased by a party of Boers till darkness enabled him to elude them.

When tired out he fell asleep behind some bushes which afforded good hiding.

At daylight he was wakened by hearing a party of seven Boer scouts, who had left their horses behind a hill and were viewing the British camp. Mike all at once was struck by a daring idea and he proceeded to carry it out.

"Presint arrums," he shouted, "an' be riddy to fire."

He then stepped boldly out in front of the astonished Boers and said:

"Put yer rifles down an' march in front av me into camp quietly or I'll giv the orther an' you'll get a dozen bullets aich."

The astonished Boers, thinking the bushes were lined with soldiers, obeyed, and when Mike had seen them secured he reported to his captain, who asked him:

"How did you manage to capture them yourself?"

He answered, "I surrhounded thim, sur."

C. D.

One Question Too Many.

A certain judge was always noted while he was on the bench for his pertinent questions to witnesses.

One day, a suit was tried before him in which a steamboat company was required to show cause why it should not pay for the damage to certain goods which had been destroyed by some truck horses, that were frightened, as it was claimed, by the horrible and unearthly whistles of the steamer which was about to depart from the pier.

One of the witnesses was Michael Sweeney, an Irishman, who was present at the time of the accident.

The council for the plaintiff, asked Sweeny if his horses were frightened by the whistle of the boat.

"They were not, sor," he said.

"But what kind of an ear have your horses, Mr. Sweeny?" said the barrister.

"They have good ears, sor."

"Did you hear the whistle yourself?"

"I did, sor."

"But," interrupted the judge, turning to the innocent looking Irishman, "what kind of a truck was it that you drove, Mike?"

"A hand cart, sor."

"Ah," said the judge, turning to the counsel——"we have asked one question too many."

W. C. R.

Digitized by Google

THE WOMAN DOCTOR.

FRANK MELVILLE had the toothache.

That fact was undeniable. Equally undeniable was the fact that it was a pretty bad one—nay if that gentleman himself had been questioned about it, he would have insisted on it that no human being had ever been under the sway of such a fiendish pain before—that it was impossible for a man to endure such agony five minutes—and this in the face of the fact that he had been suffering its red-hot tortures for fifteen minutes, and was still sufficiently alive to swear like a trooper at each extra twinge.

All day long the tooth had "growled," and now, in this dismal, little rainy town, where he was to spend the night, it had set in to ache at full swing.

Frank Melville's teeth were his pride, and he disliked the thought of having to lose any one of them; but being a man of prompt action, he made up his mind that having it out was preferable to the death which would inevitably overtake him, should he suffer until morn.

On learning there was no dentist in the town, he determined to call upon the kindly offices of the first physician.

"Where does the nearest doctor live?" he inquired of the landlord.

"Just across the way, but——"

Before he could go further, however, the agonised victim was half-way across the street.

There upon the brass door-plate Melville saw the legend in black letters:

"Dr. M. Ravers."

"Is Dr. Ravers in?" demanded he of the neatly dressed maid who answered his summons, with such fierceness that she fell back, fearing him to be an escaped lunatic.

"Is Dr. Ravers in, I asked you?" demanded he again, still more impatiently.

"Yes, sir, yes, sir."

"Then what are you staring at?"

"Nothing, sir. Walk into the surgery," answered Mary in her politest manner, feeling that any other course placed her in imminent danger of being eaten alive.

Obedient to her order, he walked into "the surgery" without further ceremony.

Instead of the doctor, however, he saw a young girl reading a book. She rose politely, and, acknowledging his presence, handed him a chair.

She waited a second or so, with an expectant look upon her face, and then asked, in a sweet, clear voice:

"Can I do anything for you? You seem to be suffering."

"No, thank you. I want to see your father."

This was at random, of course, but then Melville was not in a condition to be very lucid, or anything else that was rational.

"My father?" echoed the girl, with wonder in her voice. "Why, he has been dead ten years."

"I mean Dr. Ravers. I beg your pardon for assuming that he was your father, but this confounded toothache makes me forget everything, my manners included."

A burst of soft merriment made him look angrily at this girl who dared to laugh while he was in such misery.

"It is now my turn to ask your pardon, but I think you will understand my laughing, and excuse it. I am Dr. Ravers. Now, can I do anything for you?"

It was Melville's turn to fall back a step or two, or he would have done so but that he had seated himself at once on entering the surgery; but it is no exaggeration to say that his misery was swallowed up in the momentary shock of amazement.

"But, good heavens—I hate women doctors, and I want this tooth out," he replied angrily, as if he resented her sex, and considered himself personally aggrieved thereby.

Digitized by Google

"I'm sorry, but I don't see how I can help it now," demurely answered Dr. Ravers.

"Help what?" asked Melville.

Being a woman doctor, he knew she was laughing at him, although there was not a ghost of a smile on her face, and she shook her head gravely, as though she deprecated the circumstance.

"Where is the next doctor, or is she a woman too?" asked Melville impatiently.

"No, 'she' is a man, and lives a little further up the road, but is away for the night. If you'd wait till about noon to-morrow?" she suggested wickedly, in a questioning tone.

"Heavens! wait till noon! why don't you suggest my waiting till doomsday?" he replied savagely. "Is there no other?"

"Yes, one other—Dr. Walton."

"Is he a man or a woman?"

"He's a man, too. But——"

"But what? Tell me quick. Good gracious! woman, did you ever have the toothache? Hurry up and relieve me."

"I'm perfectly willing to be of any service. Dr. Walton who is your only remaining hope, is sick in bed. Still, you might try there. If not, come back and I'll lend you my forceps, so that you may pull it out yourself."

Melville shot out of the door, muttering to himself.

"A woman doctor! Humph! wanted the job herself, likely, I bet I'll find somebody to take out this confounded mass of pain. Lend me her forceps indeed! A woman that will stand and laugh at a man in my misery must be a perfect fiend."

But then, what could be expected of a woman who would study medicine?

Muttering to himself, he wandered up and down the muddy streets, but all to no purpose.

Misery finally brought him back to Dr. Ravers' door.

"I've come to ask you to lend me your forceps. I'm going to get some man to pull out this thing."

Dr. Ravers hesitated a moment, then said, bravely:

"I offered you my forceps in a spirit of mischief, well knowing you would never undertake the thing yourself. But I cannot put them in the hands of an ignorant person. I am too much of a physician not to be aware of the grave insults that might follow from an injudicious use of them. Yet I don't like to refuse you, for I know you are in much misery, and it seems as if I wanted to do it myself."

Melville could not help admiring the brave manner in which this little lady faced an unpleasant situation.

"Can you really do it? You don't look strong enough."

"I can really do it, and I am strong enough."

"You won't hurt me?"

"That I cannot promise. I will not hurt you unnecessarily."

Doubtfully eyeing the doctor, Frank took his seat and prepared for the operation, which, he persuaded himself, could not be much worse than the misery he was already suffering.

In a moment it was over, but so was Melville, for the sudden revulsion had caused him to faint.

In a moment he came to himself to find soft hands bathing his head.

"Am I dead?" he murmured.

"Oh, no," gaily answered the doctor. "People don't ask questions when they are dead."

Melville sat up straight and looked around in bewilderment. Suddenly it all came to him, and he exclaimed:

"By Jove! You're a plucky one!"

The doctor laughed and seated herself at some little distance while he recovered his equilibrium.

"May I ask you Mr.—Mr.——"

"Melville," supplemented Frank.

"Thank you. May I ask you, Mr. Melville, why you dislike women physicians? Is it on principle?"

"It is, madam, though it sounds ungracious in me to say so."

"But on what principle, Mr. Melville?" persisted the doctor. "Are you acquainted with many of my profession who have proved unworthy of the trust placed in them?"

Frank Melville could not think of a satisfactory answer.

"Ah! then I understand, Mr. Melville. It is prejudice, not principle."

"Mary," she continued, as the maid appeared in answer to her summons, "tell John to harness Jerry now. I shall be ready in a minute or two."

"Are you going out on such a night as this?" exclaimed Melville in amazement.

"Why not? Is it not my business to do it?"

"Well, but I thought women only half did these things."

"I never half do anything I undertake, or I should, perhaps, have left half your tooth in," she replied with dignity. "And now I must also wholly dismiss you, as there is a sick baby waiting for me two miles away."

Bewildered, Melville went over to the hotel. But weariness overcame his bewilderment, and sleep soon had possession of him.

Whirling away to the city the next day, Melville was suddenly struck with an idea that caused him to crimson and strike his knee vigorously.

"By Jove!" he exclaimed aloud, regardless of surroundings. "I never offered the woman a penny for what she did. What must she think of me! The idea of going into a doctor's office, abusing her whole tribe, and then after she had done her very best for me, never even mentioning money to her. Well, what must she think of me."

And the thought of Dr. Ravers' mirth-filled eyes, as she, no doubt, enjoyed the situation, was almost as hard to bear as the toothache had been.

"I'll send it to her as soon as I get home," he muttered.

Sitting down in his room to send the desired money, he found himself in a quandary. He did not know what her charges were. To offer her too little was shameful; to offer her too much looked like ostentation or charity. Further, if he sent it by post he would never know whether she received it unless he asked her to acknowledge it, and if he did that—ask a woman to acknowledge the receipt—he would look mean.

Altogether he found himself caring much for the opinion of this much to be despised "woman doctor," although he told himself he didn't care what she thought.

He settled it that he would go down specially and see her, and pay his bill in the course of three or four days, and "be done with her."

But before he had a chance, important business took him across the Atlantic, and the annoying matter was swallowed up in matters of greater importance.

After three months of hard work, he sat down upon he deck of the *Umbria* to rest. Noting the bustle and

Digitized by Google

confusion of voices around him, there came to him from some little distance away one "good-bye" that affected him strangely.

Turning to note the owner of the voice, he saw a face strangely familiar yet curiously unknown. Upon the arm of the young girl leant a sweet-faced, white-haired old lady.

"Be careful, mother," said the voice he knew, "you will fall."

But the warning came too late. The old lady tripped and fell directly into Frank's arms, spread to catch her.

"Thank you, sir, oh, thank you!" exclaimed the daughter, in a frightened voice. "Mother, dear, are you hurt?"

"Not at all, Maud," but the mother trembled still with fright.

"Let me take your mother downstairs," said Melville earnestly.

At the sound of his voice the daughter started (she had not looked at him before) and looked at him quickly.

"Thank you, Mr. Melville," she said, with a smile, "I shall be glad to have you help me."

"Dr. Ravers!" exclaimed Frank, enlightened at last as to the resemblance and voice which had baffled him.

The voyage was a beautiful one, and these three, so strangely thrown together, and knowing no one else, found much to say to each other, and Mrs. Ravers, who thought of what her baby boy might have been had he lived to be strong and tall, and tender as this young man was, had a very kindly feeling for Melville.

Many times Frank wished he could speak of that thoughtless act of his, but innate delicacy prevented, and he felt that, unless something extraordinary happened he must for ever have that in his mind. Frank had one peculiarity—a hatred of small obligations—and this made him uncomfortable under the present circumstances.

A few days more, and they parted, with an earnest invitation from Mrs. Ravers to come and see them—an invitation heartily accepted by Melville.

"Really," he said to himself, "I must go and see the dear old lady soon."

"Soon" proved to be at the end of a week. Week followed week, and with it, every Wednesday evening, with unfailing regularity, was Frank found at the Ravers, visiting the old lady. Maud flitted in and out, and paid no particular attention to him. But her mother noticed with a smile, that lately on Wednesdays Maud seemed in somewhat of a hurry, and managed to get through with her regular visits earlier in the day, so as to give the evening only to "casuals."

But one evening came when Mrs. Ravers was unwell and unable to see him. A sudden resolve fired Frank.

"Dr. Ravers," said he, bravely looking at her with his honest eyes. "I owe you a debt. Wait!" as she was about to interrupt him. "A year ago to-night, and just such a night, I came here for your services. Well, no," he corrected himself, with a laugh, "not exactly that, for your father's services. I have never settled the debt I owe you."

"Mr. Melville!" she exclaimed, with a hurt look that nearly distracted him.

"And to-night I am determined to pay it."

"An offer of money from you now, Mr. Melville, I regard as an insult, and one which I never expected to receive at the hands of one whom I had grown to regard as a dear friend." And tears trembled in her eyes, showing how deep was the wound in her heart.

"Miss Ravers," exclaimed Frank, with an intonation that made her tremble, while the blood drifted slowly away from her face, though she would not meet his eye. "I did not intend to offer money, I intended to offer myself. Not," he added, hypocritically, "that I consider myself anything like an equivalent for the sum due to you."

Maud looked up and laughed; she could not help it. The abject humility of this last was too much for her. It is no doubt very improper to laugh on such occasions, but it cannot be denied that she laughed.

"You see," he continued, "I want to pay my debt with interest—nay, more than interest, with love!"

"But you forget, Mr. Melville, that I am 'a woman doctor,' and you 'hate us all.'"

"Oh, no, not all, my darling!" seeing no denial in her face, "for I love you. Come!" and he held out his arms to her.

A second's hesitation, and she went forward into the shelter of his arms, saying, as she laid her head against him:

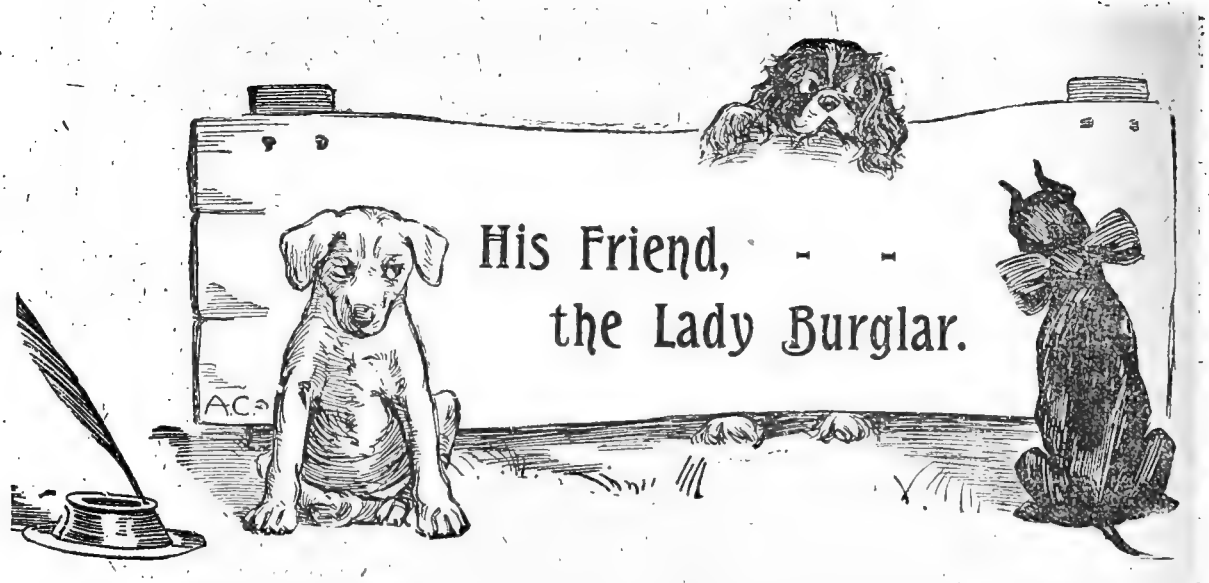
"I am tired, Frank, and you always rest me so; though I would not have acknowledged it before," she added roguishly. "But doesn't it strike you as being a rather conceited way of paying a debt?"

"I admit it," he assented, with much humility; "and even now you have a perfect right, if you prefer——" and his hand travelled towards his pocket.

"No, never mind," she replied, laughing. "A fair exchange is no robbery."

"To think I should have sold myself for five shillings!" exclaimed Melville dolefully. W. Merstone.

Digitized by Google



His Friend, - - the Lady Burglar.

AMONG the very few persons of any note in the Metropolis who had never been interviewed, whose drawing-room had not been photographed and reproduced in the illustrated papers, and whose personal habits, tastes, failings and favourite amusements had not been set forth in black and white for the edification of Tomkins and Watson and Jobbings, was Miss Brenda Winchester.

Miss Winchester had written sixteen novels in three years, a record which the *Saturday Scorcher* described as marvellous, and the *Weekly Scalper* as scandalous. Each of the sixteen had gone into eight editions, and the name of Winchester was a household word from Penzance to Pentonville. Hammersmith to the Highlands. And yet, Miss Winchester had never been interviewed, not once.

It wasn't for want of trying on the part of the Press that she had escaped a two-column dialogue in *The Young Schoolgirl*, or an illustrated interview in the *Ball's Pond Gazette*. Miss Winchester had not published her third novel, "The Woman Who Tried Very Hard To But Who Failed In The Attempt," before the interviewers were on her track. They hung round her hall-door and peeped down her area steps; they were to be discovered peering over the walls of the back garden and listening at the key-hole of the kitchen door. Further than that they never got. The talented authoress turned a deaf ear to the glibly written invitations from enterprising editors, and declined to admit a single representative of the Fourth Estate.

The mystery surrounding the personality of Miss Winchester only made the appetite of the public for information concerning her the keener. The wildest stories were set afloat concerning the lady, her habits and her doings. It was asserted by some that she lived the life of an ascetic, that her house was as bare of furniture and the common comforts of life as a monastic cell, while others asserted that she revelled in the most elaborate luxury, and lived the life of an Eastern voluptuary.

In course of time the Press grew disheartened, and caught chills and things, or were moved on by the police, and so gave up the ghost. Miss Winchester was written off as a "bad debt," and dismissed from the editorial mind as an unproductive material for the making of "copy."

Only one pressman remained who stuck firmly to his post, and resolved that, come what might, he should enter Trefoil Cottage or perish in the attempt.

Young Flinnigan, of the *Trumpet*, was an enthusiast and a firm believer in the axiom that if you want a thing, and wait long enough for it, that particular object is sooner or later bound to become yours. So he stuck to the pursuit with dogged determination.

His reward came one evening

It was announced that Miss Winchester had gone to Monte Carlo to recruit after the arduous labours incidental to the production of her seventeenth *chef d'œuvre* "A Nineteenth Century Cain, and other stories for the Young," and curious to verify the accuracy of this statement, Flinnigan betook himself to Trefoil Cottage. The house was in darkness, the blinds were drawn down, and an air of desolation reigned over the place. He wandered round to the back of the house. All was darkness there also. There was not a sign of life. He was about to move away when he noticed with a feeling of the keenest emotion that a window in the lower portion of the house was partly open.

"The work of a careless servant," he muttered, "but it is my opportunity, and why should I not avail myself of it? Surely it is a stroke of fortune, and I should be unworthy of my noble profession if I allowed the magnificent chance to slip through my fingers."

Two minutes later his mind was made up, and he had scaled the wall, crept across the lawn, raised the sash, squeezed himself through the opening, and entered the house.

Once inside it took him some moments to collect himself. The enterprise was a daring one, and the utmost caution was necessary if he did not wish to raise an alarm and get himself into trouble.

He lit a candle, and producing a note-book, began hurriedly to examine his surroundings. It was not long before professional zeal overmastered his first natural feeling of nervousness, and he was busy with note-book and pencil, jotting down details and making rough sketches of everything and anything that seemed to be worthy of record. From one room he passed to another, gloating over his success and picturing to himself the brilliant descriptive article which he would turn out.

Google

"It will be a triumph for the *Trumpet!*" he exclaimed to himself as he crept upstairs, "all London, all England, would read it, and it will be the sensation of the season."

He passed into Miss Winchester's bedchamber, a dainty apartment decorated in egg-shell blue and white, and filled with the prettiest furniture and knick-knacks that wealth and taste combined could bring together.

He was examining some curios in a cabinet when he became aware that someone was ascending the stairs.

His first thought was that a vigilant constable had observed the light, and "having suspicions," had entered the house with a view to discovering the cause thereof. But the step was not of a policeman. There was an airy, fairy-like lightness about it which never belonged to a police boot. It was the step of a woman.

"One of the servants," Flinnigan muttered, his ears wide agape to catch the smallest sound. "What an idiot I am! I might have known that the house would not have been left entirely tenantless. I will hide for the present, and at the first favourable opportunity make my escape."

He slipped into a large cupboard, having previously extinguished his candle, and awaited developments with a beating heart.

He had scarcely concealed himself when the door of the room was opened and a woman, young, pretty and graceful, entered, bearing a lamp.

Unconscious of the fact that she was not alone, she closed the door and locked it, and placing the lamp on the dressing-table proceeded to disrobe.

Flinnigan burst out into a cold perspiration.

He had not reckoned upon this incident and the spectacle unnerved him. For some moments he remained breathless and unhappy, a silent spectator of the scene before him.

Thus things reached a crucial stage, and resolving to declare himself, make a clean breast of the whole business, and throw himself upon the clemency of the stranger rather than be discovered and cause a scene, he coughed twice, and then emerged from his seclusion.

"Madame," he said, as calmly and quietly as he could, "I beg, I implore you not to be alarmed."

The young woman regarded him coolly.

"Do not distress yourself," she replied. "I am not in the least alarmed."

"Thank you," answered Flinnigan, considerably relieved, "that makes my task of explanation all the easier. I am here——"

"Any explanation is quite unnecessary. I am perfectly acquainted with the reasons which prompted you to enter this house."

"You are," he exclaimed with surprise, not unmixed with joy at the unexpected turn of affairs, "I am indeed delighted to hear it."

"Then understand," continued the young woman calmly, "that I am here on precisely the same errand, to pocket every portable thing I can lay my hands on."

"A burglar?"

"Precisely—like yourself."

"But, pardon me, you make a mistake I am——"

"That will do, my friend. I know a pal when I see one. I thought that I should be the first to crack this crib, and I didn't expect to find anyone had got here before me."

"But I thought you were going to retire for the night."

"I am going to retire directly—through the door. When you interrupted me I was taking off my things with the intention of dressing in some of the nice frocks which are stowed away in these wardrobes. You can put several silk frocks on, one over the other, you know. It's an easy way to carry them, and you don't excite suspicion. And with a big fur cloak over the lot, there's a beauty on the third hook yonder, one can walk past the sharpest-eyed constable without causing him to look at you twice."

"Very clever, no doubt, but as that is not my business, I'll wish you a very good night."

"Oh, no you won't my friend," said the damsel, retreating to the door, taking the key from the lock and calmly pocketing it, "you've been here before me, and of course you've picked up all the best bits. I thought there wasn't over much jewelery about."

Flinnigan couldn't help smiling.

"You've made a big mistake," he said, "I've got nothing, absolutely nothing."

"That's all my eye. Turn out your pockets."

"With pleasure."

Flinnigan took everything he possessed out and laid it on the dressing-table. The collection was not a particularly valuable one. A watch, bunch of keys, twelve shillings and sixpence in silver and bronze, a much worn cigar case, some odd papers and letters, his precious note-book, a lead pencil and a briar pipe. The unknown surveyed the collection grimly, and taking up the note-book examined it closely.

"What's all this description for?" she asked presently.

"Well, if you must know, I'm on the staff of the *Trumpet*, and that's to be worked up into an article and published in to-morrow's edition."

"I see," she said dreamily, "and so you are a newspaper man, at least so you say. Well, it may be so. And I daresay you would get a guinea or so for this, eh?"

"I should get five or six guineas at least. It's exclusive news."

"You shan't be done out of this. I'll write the article for you myself."

"You?"

"Oh yes, I can write a bit. I'm one of the New Women, you know; can do a little of everything: cycle, skate, play billiards, twang the banjo, sing a comic song, smoke a cigarette, dance the hornpipe, and all that. Now, sit down and be quiet and I'll turn you out some splendid 'copy.' I know every inch of this house, and I can write about things that you know nothing of. You can smoke if you like, but you mustn't speak. And if you stir I'll make it warm for you."

She went to a side table, opened a box, produced a revolver, loaded it, cocked the trigger, and placed it in front of her. Then she sat down took a pen, dipped it in the ink, reflected a moment, and then bending over a sheet of paper, she began to write with extraordinary rapidity.

Flinnigan, completely dumfounded, sank helplessly into a chair, and watched her as one bewitched.

She wrote for an hour without stopping; then she laid down her pen, and pinning the sheets neatly together, she placed them in an envelope and sealed it up.

"May I not see what you have written?"

"There is not time now. You shall see to-morrow."

Then she finished dressing, and donning a hat and cloak, she unlocked the door.

"You will wait here until I return," she said; "there is no possible means of escape, so it is useless trying to

Digitized by Google

get out. There are bars outside the window; besides it is sixty feet from the ground; so you would break your neck even if you got outside, which you can't. The door, too, is bolted on the outside, and the chimney's too small to admit you. So the best thing you can do is to sit still and finish your cigar quietly until I return."

She vanished, and he heard the bolts shot home.

He sat there until daylight broke and the lamp went out. He tried the door, the window, the chimney. All was as she had stated. He was a prisoner in an empty house with no possible chance of escape.

He watched the hands of the clock travel round as the hours slowly sped away. Then when noon was reached he grew desperate. He opened the window and yelled. He beat the door and tugged at the bell, he screamed and smashed things. Was he to be left to starve, to go mad, to die of thirst, without being able to let anyone know that he was locked in like a prisoner? One o'clock, two o'clock, three o'clock. He began to grow desperate.

Another night in that awful solitude would turn his brain. Four o'clock struck and daylight was beginning to fade when the door opened and his friend, the lady burglar, entered.

She had a newspaper in her hand. It was the *Drum*, the deadly enemy and most caustic rival of the *Trumpet*.

"It is the fourth edition," she said sweetly. "It has got your article in it. Unfortunately I sent it to the wrong paper, but it doesn't really matter, for all London is talking about it."

Speechless with rage, he tore the sheet from her hands and sat down and read.

The article was a long, scathing, and mercilessly detailed acount of his own adventures, of his capture, imprisonment and degradation. The headlines alone cut him like a knife.

THE INTERVIEWER SCOTCHED!

A SMART JOURNALIST TRAPPED BY A PRETTY WOMAN!

THE COWARDLY PENMAN AND THE BOGUS BURGLAR!

SHUT UP FOR TWELVE HOURS WITHOUT BREAD OR WATER!

The rest was to match.

And the article was signed in large capitals:

BRENDA WINCHESTER.

Needless to say, Flinnigan never did much in the interviewing line after this escapade.

F. C. THORNTON.

BOAT RACE COMPETITION.

ON Saturday, March 31st, the Oxford v Cambridge Boat Race will take place. There is every reason to believe that the contest will be an exciting one, and so that our readers might take additional interest in the national event we offer a Prize of £5 to the sender of the coupon, printed below, giving most nearly correct: (1) The Winning Boat; (2) the distance separating the two boats at the finish; (3) the time taken by the winning boat in the race. The third condition will only be used to decide the actual winner of the prize in the event of more than one giving equally correct answers to the other two questions.

The Judges' decision of the race will be our standard for making the award.

Having filled up the coupon to your thinking, sign your name and address in the space provided on the left, and get two friends to sign their names and addresses on the right. In the event of your winning the prize they will each receive £1. Competitors may send in any number of attempts, all of which may be signed by the same witnesses.

In the event of two or more competitors qualifying for the first prize, the £5 will be equally divided. The witnesses will also share in the same way.

Up to the present time fifty-six races have been rowed. Oxford have won thirty-two and Cambridge twenty-three races, the 1877 contest being a dead heat. Cambridge won last year by 3¼ lengths, the time being 2 min. 4sec. Oxford won the races for the preceding nine years, their times being from a minimum of 18min. 47sec. to a maximum of 22min. 15sec., and their wins during that time from half-a-length to thirteen lengths.

All envelopes containing coupons should be addressed: "BOAT RACE COMPETITION," *Short Stories*, 17 Henrietta Street, London, W.C., and should reach us not later than the first post, Wednesday, March 28th.

"SHORT STORIES" BOAT RACE COMPETITION COUPON.

TIME OF WINNING BOAT:

Winning Boat: .....

Min. / Sec.

Distance Won by: .....

Competitor. .....

.....

.....

Witnesses. .....

.....

.....

.....

Digitized by Google

DRUNKENNESS

CURED. This can be done with or without patient's knowledge. Send me a stamp and I will tell you how. (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Mrs. C. H. (Room 8), 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

NOSE

MACHINES, LEES RAY, S. S. Dept., South Castle St. Liverpool, is a specialist on Ugly and Red Noses. Send stamp for particulars of his patent scientific Nose Improvers. Red Nose Cure, medically approved, 3/9. Outstanding Ear Machines, 11/6.

Zox Cures Neuralgia

FREE TEST OFFERED.

So certain are we that this distressing Disease of the Nerves can be cured, that we will gladly post two free samples to any reader of SHORT STORIES who will send stamped addressed envelope. Easy and pleasant to take; free from injurious substance. *Of all Chemists at 1/- and 2/6 per Box, or Post free from*

ZOX CO., 11 HATTON GARDEN, LONDON, E.C.

WHY BE FAT?

When a lady, who has discovered a simple means of Self-Cure will be happy to send particulars of same to any sufferer from this distressing complaint. Free on receipt of stamped addressed envelope. ADDRESS:

Mrs. TREVOR WELLS,

63 *HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON, W.C.*

VARICOCELE.

Men who are weak and suffering from nervous exhaustion, loss of vigour, Varicocele, &c., can be successfully and permanently cured without operation or detention from business by THE DR. COLLINS most improved and rational method medical science has ever yet produced.

Particulars and proofs of successful cures sent free on receipt of address.

THE COLLINS REMEDY CO.,

Gothic House, 9 Erskine Street, Liverpool

JUNO CYCLES FOR LADIES AND GENTS.

FREE OR FIXED WHEELS.

THE VERY BEST.

Carriage Paid. Discount for Cash.

	Monthly
£10	10/8
£10 10s. ...	17/6
£12	20/-
£12 12s. ...	21/-
£14 14s. ...	24/5
£15 15s. ...	26/3

Rand Racer ... £10 0s. 16s. 8d. Monthly. Write for New Light Roadster, £10 10s. 17s. 6d. Monthly. Season's List of JUNO Cycles and Accessories, over 100 pages, sent post free. Scorcher Brake, 1/-; Standard Cyclometer, 10,000 miles, 1/10

METEOR PLOTAN MACHINISTS CO. Ltd.

Juno Cycle School & Works, 75, 76, Bishopsgate Street, Without, E.C., and Piccadilly Circus, London, W.

A SUM of from 12s. to 25s. per week can be earned in spare hours or evenings by either sex everywhere.—Send addressed envelope for particulars to Box 24, Eclipse Works, 89 Aldersgate Street, E.C.

HAVE YOU EVER TRIED KEATING'S LOZENGES FOR YOUR COUGH?

DR. GABRIEL, M.D., L.R.C.P.

writes from South Park, Cardiff, Sept. 28th.

"I have now prescribed them for the "last 8 years in my hospitals and private "practice, and find them of great benefit. "I certainly and most strongly "recommend them."

Sold everywhere in Tins 1/1½ each.

HAIR DESTROYED.

Send me an envelope (stamped and addressed) and I will tell you how to remove all superfluous hair **free of charge.** (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Miss E. V. (Room 3), 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

DEVONSHIRE CREAM

(Really Genuine.) In Patent Air-tight Tins. ½-lb., **1/4**; 1-lb., **2/4**; 2-lb., **4/-**, including Tin and Postage.

Mrs. CONYERS, Morchard Bishop, DEVON.

THE MOST NUTRITIOUS.

EPPS'S

GRATEFUL—COMFORTING.

COCOA

BREAKFAST—SUPPER.

ROSY CHEEKS

and a lovely complexion, skin clear as Alabaster, produced by one box of **Dr. LENNOX'S Harmless Arsenic Wafers,** the only cure for Pimples, Blackheads, Sallow or Greasy Skins, no matter how bad. Price per box, privately packed with Medical and Analytical Reports by Dr. Griffiths and Granville Sharpe, F.C.S., 2/6 post free. H. LENNOX, 21 Electric Avenue, Brixton, London. Absolutely harmless to the most delicate. Thousands of testimonials.

TOO STOUT.

I was for years; by chance I came across a simple home remedy that reduced me from 17st. to 10st. 12lbs., and I will willingly send particulars **free** to any sufferer enclosing stamp. Mrs. L. E. FELL, 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR.

KAPUTINE

SAFE REMEDY CURES

HEADACHE and NEURALGIA

IMMEDIATELY,

And is sold by all leading Chemists in Packets of 18 Doses, 1s.

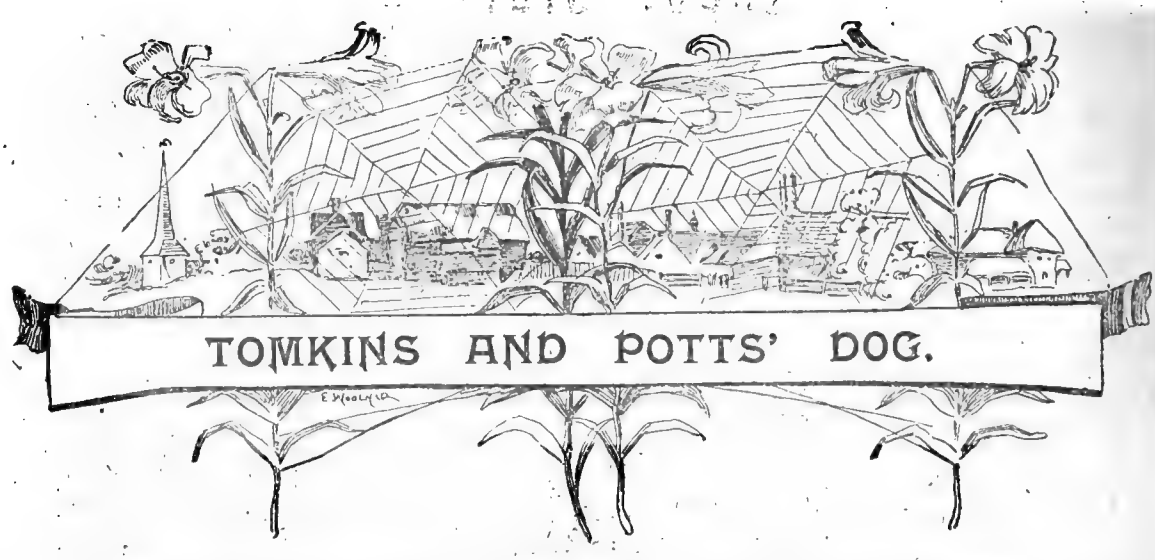
To ANYONE HAVING THE LEAST DIFFICULTY, it will be sent post free for 12 Stamps by "KAPUTINE Ltd.," Huddersfield; or, on receipt of a stamped addressed envelope, A. M. Kaputine, Huddersfield, you will receive a free sample.

The fact that "KAPUTINE" is recommended by many leading Medical Men, and is used in National Hospitals and Infirmaries proves that it is THE, THE recognised SAFE REMEDY FOR HEADACHES.

Refuse Substitutes and demand "KAPUTINE," the Safe Remedy. There is no substituto "LIKE IT"; nothing "AS GOOD"; nothing "SIMILAR."

KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR.

Digitized by Google



TOMKINS AND POTTS' DOG.

A MAN called on a solicitor the other day, and said, "My name is Tomkins. I called to see you about a dog difficulty that bewilders me, and I thought maybe you might throw some light on it. Might give me the law points, so's I'd know whether it was worth while suing or not.

"Well, you see, me and Potts went into partnership on a dog; we bought him. He was a setter, and Potts and I went shares in him, so's to take him out shooting. It was never exactly settled which half of him I owned or which half belonged to Potts; but I formed an idea in my own mind that the hind end was mine and the front end Potts'. Consequence was, that when the dog barked I always said:

"'There goes Potts' half exercising himself.'

"When the dog's tail wagged I always considered that my end was being agitated, and, of course, when one of my hind legs scratched one of Potts' ears or one of his shoulders, I was perfectly satisfied; first, because that sort of thing was good for the whole dog, and second, because the thing would get about even when Potts' head would reach round and snap at a fly on my hind legs.

"Well, things went along smoothly enough for a while, until one day that dog began to get into the habit of running round after his tail. He was the most foolish dog I ever saw. Used to chase his tail round and round until he'd get so giddy he couldn't bark, and you know I was frightened lest it might hurt the dog's health, and as Potts didn't seem to be willing to keep his end from circulating in pursuit of my end, I made up my mind to chop the dog's tail off, so's to make him reform and behave.

"So last Saturday I caused the dog to back up against a log, and then I suddenly dropped the axe on his tail pretty close up, and the next minute he was running round the yard howling like a boatload of wild cats. Just then Potts came up and he made remarks because I'd cut off that tail.

"One word brought another, and pretty soon Potts set the dog on me—half mine, too, mind you—and the dog bit me in the leg, see that; look at that leg. About half a pound gone; eat up by that dog.

"Now, what I want to see you about is this! can't I recover damages for assault and battery from Potts? What I chopped off belonged to me, recollect. I owned an individual half of that setter pup, from the tip of his tail right up to his third rib, and I had a right to cut away as much of it as I had a mind to; while Potts being sole owner of the dog's head is responsible when he bites anyone or when he barks at night."

"I don't know," replied the lawyer, musingly, "there haven't been any decisions on cases exactly like this, but what does Mr. Potts say upon the subject."

"Why, Potts' view is that I divided the dog the wrong way. When he wants to map out his half he draws a line from the head to the tail. That gives me one hind leg and one fore leg, and makes him joint proprietor in the tail. And he says that if I wanted to cut off my half of the tail I might have done it, and he wouldn't have cared; but what made him mad was that I wasted his property without consulting him.

"But that theory seems to me a little strained, and, if it's legal, why, I'm going to sell half of the dog at a sacrifice sooner than hold any interest in him on those principles. Now, what do you think about it? Don't sue Potts, you say?"

"I think not."

"Can't get damages for the piece that's been bitten out of me?"

"I hardly think you can."

"Well, well! And yet you talk about civilisation, and temples of justice, and such things. All right. Let it go. I can stand it; but don't ever anybody undertake to tell me that the law protects human beings in their rights. Good morning."

"Wait a moment, Mr. Tomkins, you've forgotten my fee!"

"F-f-fee! Why, you don't charge anything when I don't sue, do you?"

"Certainly, for my advice. My fee is one guinea."

"One guinea! Why, that's just what I paid for my half of that dog. I haven't got a shilling to my name. But I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll make over all my rights in that setter pup to you, and you can go round and fight it out with Potts. If that dog bites me again, I'll sue you and Potts as sure as my name's Tompkins."

E. N. G.

Digitized by Google

A REGULAR CORKER

PEARSON'S WONDERFUL TALKING PUZZLE

IT'S HARD TO HOLD A GOOD THING DOWN.

WE CAN'T STOP THE RUSH.

HAVE YOU GOT ONE?

£100 in PRIZES.

EVERYONE HAS AN EQUAL CHANCE.

GET ONE TO-DAY.

SOLD AT ALL BOOKSTALLS AND NEWSAGENTS.

. . . PRICE . . .

ONE • SHILLING.

POST FREE, 1s. 1½d. DIRECT FROM US.

Mark your envelope "TALKING PUZZLE," and address it to

C. ARTHUR PEARSON LTD., HENRIETTA STREET, LONDON.

Digitized by Google

The Brain Gymnasium.

In these competitions a prize of £2 will be awarded each week to the competitor whose attempt we receive giving the correct solutions of all the puzzles. If more than one is absolutely correct the prize of £2 will be given to the first correct attempt dealt with.

If no lists of absolutely correct solutions are sent in the first prize will be awarded to the competitor whose attempt is first dealt with showing the fewest mistakes.

Each week we shall award in addition to the above, either ten of our silver plated pencil-cases or ten popular six shilling novels to be distributed amongst the competitors whose attempts are absolutely correct and have failed to win the first prize, or, if no complete lists of correct solutions are received, to those whose attempts show the fewest mistakes.

Write all your solutions on one sheet of paper, putting the number against each. Post the batch in an envelope marked "Brain Gymnasium," to reach the Editor, Short Stories, 18 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, W.C., by Monday, March 26th, 1900.

No. 64.

From the letters contained in words signifying "a mark," "a fruit," "a large bird," "a small bird," "to idle about," and "a fast ning," form the names of three well-known sports—two words being used for each game.

No. 65.

The name of a celebrated painter will give the letters used in w rds signifying "a measure," "condition," "trim," and "a company." If these words be prope ly arranged, their diagonal, read downwards from left to right, will give a word meaning "a weapon." What is the name of the painter?

No. 66.

The initial of a word signifying "to cut" can be changed eight times, so that eight other words are given. The letters of each of these words can be transposed so that nine diffe ent words are formed. If the finals of these are changed, nine other words are given. What are the words?

No. 67.

AC—DO—SA—OD—FL—ST—ON—FA—TR—OT—CI
HO—UR—LE—SO—CE—AM—NE—RO—BE—SO—AR.

Join the above pairs of letters so that eleven words of equal length are given. Take the two central letters of seven, and the first and last letters of the others, and form the names of a famous British General and a country with which his name will always be associated.

No. 68.

*	*	*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*	*	*

The top line of asterisks represents the name of a Shakespearian character, and the bottom line, read backwards, the name of her father. The vertical rows are to give words which signify "a fish," "a poem," "an eatable," "a mark," "lazily," "money," and "assists."

No. 69.

Form three words of the same length from the following letters, and place them so th t, read vertically, five other words are given:

A A A B E E E N O O P R R T T

RESULT OF BRAIN GYMNASIUM.

Nos. 40 to 45.

In this week's competition, fifty-two competitors were absolutely correct. We have again added to the prizes offered (viz., £2 and ten silver-plated pencil-cases), and are forwarding to each of the following a postal order for one shilling, together with one of the pencil-cases.

E. J. Carter, Holloway; O. S. Sinnatt, Manchester; W. F. Broad, Fulham; J. Boyd, Glasgow; E. Hutchings, High Holborn; Miss M. Selvey, Cardiff; A. Gardener, Leytonstone; Miss M. Abbott, Norbiton; H. H. Edmondson, Brighton; C. D. Frazer, Southend-on-Sea; F. Be-sant, Falmouth; S. J. Bailey, Sunningdale, Berks; J. Matthews, Chiswick; Miss K. M. Wood, Sidcup; T. W. Sandford, Stratford; R. H. Wolseley, Worcestershire; E. J. Webster, Maidstone; S. F. Weall, Barnsbury; H. B. Thompson, Bracknell, Berks; J. Percy, Custom House, E.; J. McCormick, Dublin; Miss E. Hill, Barnes; F. A. Kirke, Southend-on-Sea; Miss O. Marcus, Blackheath; A. F. Smith, Hornsey; R. Patterson, Newcastle-on-Tyne; Mrs. E. Mays, New Brompton; Miss M. Rafferty, Edinburgh; J. Purdon, Enfield; J. White, Liverpool; H. Birch, Stoke Newington; Miss M. Maxted, Clapham Junction; H. Barnes, Camberwell; W. Gyde, Warley; T. Picton, Fulham; A. Ward, Portsmouth; W. Crampton, Manchester; F. G. Melville, Bristol; C. Rowland, Droylsden; Miss N. Garnham, Holloway; W. J. Webster, Bromley; C. M. Brock, Botley; M. Carpenter, South Hampstead; Miss M. Levy, Bayswater; J. Braidwood, Edinburgh; A. J. Howlett, Leyton; A. R. Carpenter, South Hampstead; J. Kean, Edinburgh; C. Till, Sheerness; J. Day, Stamford Hill; Mrs. Bessant, Falmouth; H. J. Gibbs, Swansea.

SOLUTIONS TO PUZZLES

Appearing in No. 582, February 24th.

No. 46.

P I P.
U S E.
P O T.

No. 47. MOZAMBIQUE. Mood—zeal—mob—inquiring—uneasiness.

No. 48.

D R A Y. Y A R D.

No. 49. A ROLLING STONE GATHERS NO MOSS.

No. 50.

We do that in our zeal,
Our calmer moments are
afraid to answer.
Scott.—"Woodstock" Chap. xvii.

No. 51.

F O R T
O B O E
R O A N
T E N T.

SHORT STORIES ADVERTISEMENT RATES.

Single column, per inch, per insertion	£0 10 0
Double " "	1 0 0
Full page inside, facing page of matter, either white paper or 2nd or 3rd page of cover, or back page, per insertion	10 0 0
Half-page " "	5 0 0
Quarter-page " "	2 10 0
Eighth-page " "	1 5 0
Front page, whole " "	12 10 0
" half	6 5 0

All spaces above one-eighth of a page are charged at per page rate.

Series discount: 5 per cent. for 13, 10 per cent. for 26, 15 per cent. for 52 insertions.

Black blocks are charged 25 per cent. extra. All advertisements are subject to approval. All copy must be sent in by Noon on Tuesday, April 20th, if intended for the issue on sale April 3rd, and dated April 7th. The Proprietors reserve the right to hold over or suspend the insertion of any advertisement without prejudice to other insertions on order. All communications should be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, "Pearson's Weekly" Offices, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Printed and Published by C. Arthur Pearson Ltd., at Pearson's Weekly Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

NOBODY WILL STEAL THEM.

There are two reasons why the Crown jewels are never stolen from the Tower of London. They are in a strong place, well guarded, and are dangerous things to handle when dishonestly come by.

Most losses of valuables are due either to carelessness on the part of the owners or custodians, or to bribery. Perhaps the burglar's vocation is under no circumstances an absolutely safe one, but not infrequently he chances upon a "job" which is both easy and lucrative. I do not mention this fact for the unworthy purpose of inducing any of the youth of the land to enter the profession, but solely to throw illustrative light upon quite another theme. Still, there is a relation between them, and we shall hit it after we have talked a bit about the case of Mrs. Mary Rowlands, who lives in Wales.

The lady says that no longer ago than February (1898) she had a severe attack of influenza, followed by bronchitis. At this point we are concerned to know whether the influenza was in any sense responsible for the bronchitis, as cause and effect. If so, why? It is well understood, of course, in England, where influenza is so common, that other ailments *do* follow it; yet, probably, the majority of us have not settled in our minds the reason for it.

At all events, Mrs. Rowlands had a low, bad time. The trouble lingered along as, sometimes, winter does, away down into the period proper for May blossoms. She could not seem to get the better of the throat ailment nor master the lethargy and weakness left her as a legacy by the influenza. Her condition may be likened unto that of a ship which has indeed survived a gale but finds herself stripped of the sails needed to enable her to take advantage of gentler winds.

The lady's hope of getting back her lost strength by taking plenty of solid, nourishing food was illusory. Every meal of that kind caused fearful distress in the stomach and acute pain at the chest. Nature distinctly repudiated the solid food, and almost as strenuously objected to the liquids, such as broths, teas, and milk. It looked as if Mrs. Rowlands must starve at her own table.

Then came on asthmatic symptoms, so bad, she was often obliged to gasp for breath. Between this combination of complaints she got but little rest day or night. Soon after arose a threat of a still more serious disease—a threat happily not fulfilled. I refer to the cold, clammy sweats that broke out upon her, pointing to a fatal decline. The fear was natural, as grim Consumption, with his poisoned dart, often approaches by that same road.

"I became so reduced and feeble," the lady writes, "that my daughter had to nurse me constantly. I could not get into or out of bed without her help. In the house, or to others, I was of no use at all. The doctor who attended me left nothing untried that he knew of; but, in spite of all he did, I grew worse and worse.

"Where I should have been to-day, whether in the land of the living or not, who can tell, if a kind Providence had not intervened to save me? In some way my husband heard of Mother Seigel's Syrup, and persuaded me to try it. I began taking it, and soon felt better. My appetite returned, and all kinds of food agreed with me. With plenty of nourishment I gained strength rapidly. The asthma and the bronchial trouble vanished, and almost before I could realise it, I found myself in the best of health, and have continued so to be ever since. For my remarkable and unexpected recovery I am under obligation to Mother Seigel's Syrup; and so I tell all whom I know.—Mary Rowlands, Deri, via Cardiff, August 31st, 1898."

One thing Mrs. Rowlands says in her letter which I have reserved for this place, namely, that she was a *dyspeptic*. Her system was weakened and her blood rendered impure by indigestion. That is the main point. *That is why she was open to the attacks of influenza, bronchitis, and asthma.* Her body castle being weak, the precious jewel of health was stolen.

Keep the digestion strong, and the blood clean and pure, by the frequent use of Mother Seigel's Syrup, and there will be no soil for the germs of disease to grow in. The system, thus guarded, protects the health as the walls and doors of the Tower hold safe the Crown jewels.

Digitized by Google

Sorry to trouble you,

but to be forewarned is to be forearmed.

The general public

are hereby warned, if an effort is made by any retailer to induce them to take any other remedy when BEECHAM'S PILLS have been asked for, that

The article offered as a substitute

invariably carries more profit, and will not give the same satisfaction to the purchaser.

BEECHAM'S PILLS

have been before the public for over fifty years, and, in spite of all opposition, are to-day more popular than ever. The fact is, they recommend themselves.

Reader! buy what you want

when you want, and where you want, and do not be persuaded into buying what you do not want.

Avoid all experiments

with unknown so-called remedies, but adhere to BEECHAM'S PILLS, the bridge which has no doubt already carried you over many an anxious time.

In every minute particular

BEECHAM'S PILLS are always the same, being scrupulously mixed under the same supervision, and made of the best drugs procurable, with the most excellent machinery.

The manufactory at St. Helens

is a model of system and cleanliness, and the care bestowed on their manufacture ensures BEECHAM'S PILLS being always reliable.

Advertisements should be sent to "Short Stories" Advertisement Department, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.